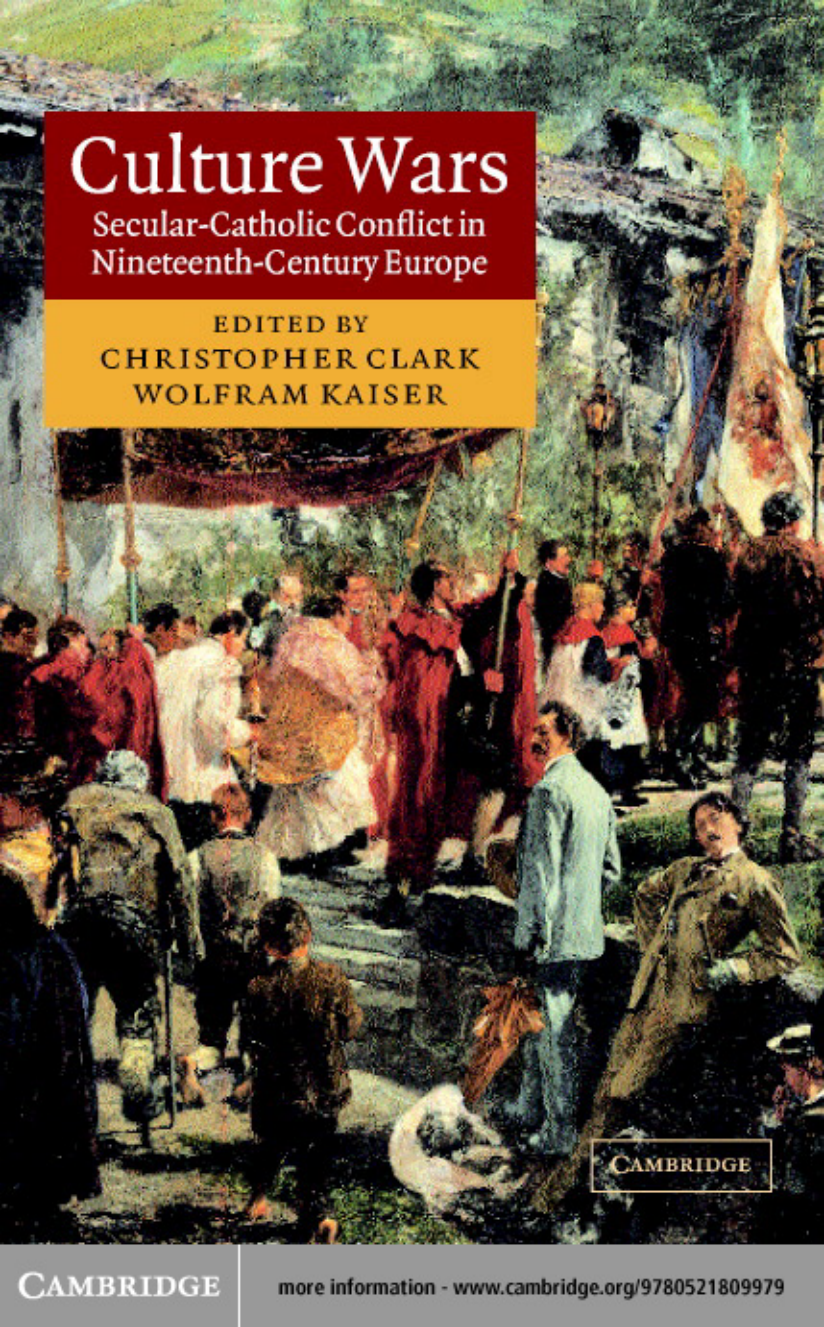




Culture Wars

Secular-Catholic Conflict in
Nineteenth-Century Europe

EDITED BY
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CULTURE WARS

Across nineteenth-century Europe, the emergence of constitutional and democratic nation-states was accompanied by intense conflict between Catholics and anticlerical forces. At its peak, this conflict touched virtually every sphere of social life: schools, universities, the press, marriage and gender relations, burial rites, associational culture, the control of public space, folk memory and the symbols of nationhood. In short, these conflicts were 'culture wars', in which the values and collective practices of modern life were at stake.

These 'culture wars' have generally been seen as a chapter in the history of specific nation-states. Yet it has recently become increasingly clear that the Europe of the mid- and later nineteenth century should also be seen as a common politico-cultural space. This book breaks with the conventional approach by setting developments in specific states within an all-European and comparative context, offering a fresh and revealing perspective on one of modernity's formative conflicts.

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INTRODUCTION

The European culture wars

Christopher Clark and Wolfram Kaiser

Across Europe, the emergence of constitutional and democratic nation-states was accompanied by intense conflict between Catholics and anticlerical forces over the place of religion in a modern polity. There had always been intermittent institutional friction between church and state in central and western Europe, but the conflicts that came to a head in the second half of the nineteenth century were of a different kind. They involved processes of mass mobilisation and societal polarisation. They embraced virtually every sphere of social life: schools, universities, the press, marriage and gender relations, burial rites, associational culture, the control of public space, folk memory and the symbols of nationhood. In short, these conflicts were ‘culture wars’, in which the values and collective practices of modern life were at stake.

In Prussia, the largest member state of the German Empire, Otto von Bismarck’s government launched a salvo of laws intended to neutralise Catholicism as a political force, triggering a ‘struggle of cultures’ (*Kulturkampf*) that shaped the contours of German politics and public life for more than a generation. In Italy, the annexation of the Papal States and the city of Rome, and the ‘imprisonment’ of the pope within the walls of the Vatican produced a stand-off between the church and the secular Kingdom of Italy, with far-reaching consequences for Italian political culture. In France, the elite of the Third Republic and the forces of clericalism waged bitter rhetorical battles, to the point where it seemed that secular and Catholic France had become two separate realities. In Belgium, a long period of growing friction between liberals and Catholic political interests culminated in the ‘school war’ of 1879–84, during which liberal and Catholic crowds clashed in the streets of Brussels, again with lasting repercussions for Belgian society and political culture. In the Netherlands, heated conflict over Catholic processions, which were legally forbidden, together with the pressurising impact of the *Kulturkampf* underway in neighbouring Germany, accelerated the articulation of Dutch society into discrete

socio-cultural milieux. In Switzerland, confessional and secular–Catholic tensions at local and cantonal level became intertwined with the most important issues in national politics. Political life in nineteenth-century Spain was marked by an extreme antipathy between Catholic and liberal–progressive interests that engendered a climate of mutual intolerance whose effects would be felt far into the twentieth century. In Austria and Hungary, Catholics and liberals clashed over civil marriage, schooling and Protestant burials in the aftermath of the new political settlement established by the Compromise of 1867. In England, concern over the growing confidence and strength of Roman Catholicism in Europe and Ireland goes a long way towards explaining the sharpness of the conflicts between Anglicans and nonconformists over issues of church, state and schooling, which were in any case Protestant variants of the Catholic–secular clashes occurring elsewhere in Europe.

At the national level, the chief protagonists in these struggles were liberal-dominated state institutions and anticlerical politicians and journalists, as well as the Vatican, the Catholic hierarchy, Catholic parties, and the Catholic press. However, they were also a socially deep phenomenon whose effects were felt not only in legislatures and parliamentary committees, but also in towns and villages. They involved not only political parties, ministerial factions, and senior clergymen, but also urban free-thinking clubs, local liberal committees, parish priests and lay parish councils, Catholic activists and the masses of the faithful. In some parts of Europe, the culture wars were intensified by confessional tensions between Catholics and Protestants; in other states, anticlericalism and secularism were powerful social forces in their own right.¹

Historians have generally treated these conflicts in a purely national context. In part, this reflects the dominant concern of the European historiography of this era with the process of nation-state formation. It is

¹ For a stimulating interpretation of the nineteenth century as a ‘second confessional age’, see Olaf Blaschke, ‘Das 19. Jahrhundert: Ein Zweites Konfessionelles Zeitalter?’, *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 26 (2000), 38–75. From Blaschke’s perspective, the German *Kulturkampf* appears as an episode in an epochal process of ‘confessionalisation’. This is an illuminating perspective for countries of mixed confession such as Holland, Germany or Switzerland, where secular–clerical conflicts were overlaid by historical tensions between the confessions. It is less helpful in explaining secular–Catholic conflict in predominantly mono-confessional states such as Spain, France, Belgium, Austria and Italy, where the faultlines of conflict were primarily between Catholic ultramontanists and Catholic (or secular) liberals. Even in nations of mixed denomination, the confessionalisation paradigm captures one of the important motors of conflict, but does not take account of secularism and anticlericalism as autonomous social and political forces with their own deep historical roots. It is worth noting that Rudolf Virchow, who coined the term ‘Kulturkampf’ for general usage, was in fact an unbeliever and thus a Protestant only in a nominal sense.

also an inevitable consequence of the culture of national specialisations that still prevails in academic history. Germany's *Kulturkampf* figured as a specifically German eruption of forces unleashed by the Reformation, Napoleon's reordering of the German states, and the belated unification of the German Empire. Swiss historiography focused on the interaction between confessional and secular-clerical tensions on the one hand, and the evolution of Switzerland's peculiar federal system on the other. Italian historians emphasised the unique complex of problems thrown up by the Roman question. The conflict between the 'two Frances' was seen as part of that nation's distinctive revolutionary legacy, while it has often been assumed that Britain was insulated from the heat of continental confessional struggle by the supposedly temperate, consensual and pragmatic quality of its political culture. The literature on nineteenth-century confessional or secular-clerical conflict has also tended until recently to focus more or less exclusively on high politics. The emphasis has been on parliamentary debates, legislation, partisan conflict and the skirmishing of journalists.

These are, of course, perfectly valid perspectives on a phenomenon that was intimately tied up with questions of national identity and marked by sometimes spectacular public interventions by governments. Yet it has recently become increasingly clear that the Europe of the mid- and later nineteenth century should in some respects be seen as a common politico-cultural space. The mobilisation of European Catholics around a papalist agenda was a transnational phenomenon, as were the profound changes that transformed Catholic devotional cultures across the continent. The same can be said for that robustly secular political and literary culture that was common to so many liberal administrations in the second half of the nineteenth century. In this sense, it appears justified to speak of *European* culture wars; a pan-European phenomenon of this scope demands an all-European and comparative perspective, not least in order more precisely to ascertain the relative weight of the particular factors that determined the outbreak, course and consequences of the culture wars in the European states.

At the same time, recent historical research, while remaining alert to the national and high-political dimension of the conflicts, has begun to focus on regions and localities. The rediscovery of cultural history has stimulated interest in the symbolic representations that fed the culture wars: national and local commemorations and festivities, liberal or republican monuments, the deployment of resonant phrases and key words, the evolution, on both sides of the conflict, of a language of visual caricature, the demonstrative staging of religious festivities such as pilgrimages and processions.

The aim of this volume is to draw upon these recent research trends in order to facilitate a comparative analysis of the Catholic–secular culture wars as a European phenomenon. Two introductory essays by the editors discuss the two transnational antagonists: the revitalised Catholic church of the nineteenth century and the liberal and anticlerical networks of mid- to late nineteenth-century Europe. In the country-by-country studies that follow, an effort has been made to maintain sufficient consistency of approach to allow comparative and overarching themes to emerge. We have tried, as it were, when writing Italy (or Germany, or the Netherlands) to think Europe. The specificity of national experiences has of course necessitated variations in emphasis, but all contributions combine a general introduction to the origins and course of the culture wars in each national setting with analysis of a particular case study focusing either on an individual locality or on an individual issue in the conflict. Where the case study concerns local conflicts, the aim has been to link an understanding of how the issues were played out in specific political cultures with the virtues of a ‘micro-history’ that can offer, in Carlo Ginzburg’s words, ‘a graphic image of the networks of social relations into which the individual is inserted’.² Where the focus is on a specific policy issue, the aim has been to illuminate the conditions and mechanisms by which particular institutions (schools, for example) could become invested with a symbolic importance capable of mobilising powerful collective allegiances.

The country chapters that follow yield a number of general insights. They show, firstly, how interconnected the various culture wars were in the eyes of contemporary observers. The spectacle of the *Kulturkampf* in Bismarck’s Germany exercised a powerful influence on political and cultural elites in the other European states, though frequently as a warning of what was to be avoided rather than as a model for emulation. Developments in Rome had an even more powerful effect, both on Catholics, who responded with indignation and vows of allegiance to the privations imposed upon the pope by the nascent Kingdom of Italy, and upon liberals and other anticlericals, who responded with outrage and paranoia to the increasingly robust doctrinal and political assertions emanating from Rome. As these chapters also show, the transnational resonance of such issues was heightened by the thickening of communicative networks – anticlerical and Catholic – that spanned the continent. The Catholic press nourished a sense of solidarity among Belgian, Austrian and Italian Catholics with

² C. Ginzburg and C. Poni, ‘The Name and the Game: Unequal Exchange and the Historical Marketplace’, in E. Muir and G. Ruggiere (eds.), *Microhistory and the Lost Peoples of Europe* (Baltimore, 1991), 6.

their beleaguered co-religionists in other countries, while the translation and reprinting of anticlerical books and articles created a European pantheon of secular celebrities and a stock of shared images and arguments. How these cross-border affinities interacted with commitments closer at hand depended, as the chapters show, upon the conditions obtaining in each case.

As all the single-country studies demonstrate, the course and ferocity of the culture wars both influenced and were determined by broader processes of political and social change. Of these, perhaps the most important was the expansion of political participation that occurred within the European states during the middle and later decades of the nineteenth century. In many of the countries studied in this book, the most intense phase of culture war followed a moment of historically significant constitutional innovation – the Compromise of 1867 in Austria and Hungary, for example, franchise reform in Belgium and Britain, the formation of new partly democratic national polities in Italy and Germany, or the establishment of the Third Republic in France. In an environment where franchises were opening up and parliaments were acquiring more power, institutions that had been locked into relatively fixed systems of representation – marriage and burial, schooling, dress, public space, even the sacral quality of royalty or of the state – were now up for grabs. One of the most disturbing and exhilarating aspects of democracies – especially emergent ones – is their competitive character. This is essential to understanding not only the intensity of the culture wars, but also the crucial role played in them by the print media and by those pseudo-plebiscitary mass performances – demonstrations, marches, processions – by which each side sought to show the other how successful it had been in gaining the allegiance of ‘the people’.

The importance of newspaper journalism in fanning the flames of culture war is a theme that runs through many of the chapters. After all, as Margaret Lavinia Anderson has pointed out, the culture wars of nineteenth-century Europe were not literally wars.³ Although there were certainly episodes of physical violence against people and property, these wars were primarily fought through the cultural media: the spoken and printed word, the image, the symbol. The ‘mediated’ quality of these conflicts is evident in many of the studies below. One of the most striking features of this era is the sometimes gaping discrepancy between the virtual reality of culture war rhetoric, in which we appear to be contemplating a struggle to the knife

³ Margaret L. Anderson, ‘Afterword: Living Apart and Together in Germany’, in Helmut W. Smith, *Protestants, Catholics and Jews in Germany, 1800–1914* (Oxford, 2001), 319–32; here 326.

between two diametrically opposed socio-cultural universes, and the lived reality of European societies, in which the shock of confrontation was muted at every level by a range of compromises and pragmatic fudges, even at the height of the 'hot culture wars' that raged across Europe from the 1860s to the 1880s. In the intermittent phases of rhetorical escalation that characterise this era, a key role fell to those 'snipers' on both sides of the divide whose intransigent appeals to prejudice and fear raised emotional temperatures in both camps.

In the dynamic and troubled environment of Europe's fledgling democracies, the era of liberal dominance proved short-lived. In the battle for mass support, the liberals were often outperformed by the Catholics, who proved much more skilful in mobilising those elements of the population – particularly in rural areas – whose presence in politics had previously scarcely been felt, and who feared they would gain little from the economic prescriptions and elitist politics of liberalism. But as a number of chapters in this volume make clear, the liberals were also under threat from secular political forces closer to home. As Europe's societies industrialised, the popular pressure behind left-progressive, and later socialist, programmes grew dramatically. In one sense, it could be said that the socialist parties, with their forthrightly secular outlook, merely inherited the culture warrior's mantle thrown aside by the declining liberal parties. On the other hand, most socialists had bigger fish to fry than the priests, and the presence of increasingly successful mass parties on the left tended to drive liberals and Catholics into an uneasy truce in the name of property and the 'social order'. In this sense, the rise of socialism cooled the heat of the culture wars by diverting some of its energies into other confrontations.

Yet this does not imply that the polarities of culture war left no lasting trace on Europe's political cultures. On the contrary, as many of these essays show, they structured politics in ways that outlasted the period of most intense conflict. In some states, this was reflected in a realignment of partisan allegiances or in subtle but lasting changes in their character. In others, the culture wars left an enduring imprint on popular voting behaviour. Their impact on political cultures more generally appears to have been ambivalent. It has been argued, on the one hand, that they contributed in many states to processes of democratisation by encouraging vast reserves of previously inactive subjects to mobilise in support of specific objectives, using the tools provided by newly devised regimes of mass suffrage. But it has also been suggested that they contributed in some states to a climate of intolerance and a tendency to shroud political claims in a rhetoric of intransigent absolutes.

Of all the goods for which Catholics and anticlericals contended during the culture wars era, the most encompassing was the nation itself and the collective identity that attached to it. As the essays in this volume show, anticlericals across Europe aligned themselves with the cause of the nation, which was imagined as an autonomous collectivity of unbound (male) consciences. They denounced their opponents as the stooges of a 'foreign' power structure bent on undermining the integrity and distinctiveness of the nation-states. The passionate commitment to a specific concept of the nation was one of the central escalatory mechanisms of the culture war era, for it could always be argued (by liberals) that what was at stake in the burial of a Protestant corpse in a Catholic graveyard, or the unveiling of a memorial to a condemned Renaissance 'heretic', or the closing of a local girls' school run by nuns, was not simply the right of an individual to a dignified interment, or control over public representation, or the entitlement of children to an education free of potentially divisive religious content, but the very soul of the nation itself, its independence, its cultural, political and economic modernity. Indeed, the equation of secularism with modernity, which passed via the Protestant National Liberal political theorist Max Weber into the fabric of the 'modernisation theory' that has underwritten so much of the most authoritative writing on European history since the 1960s, may well be the most enduring legacy of the European culture wars.

Constraints of space and the need to maintain a degree of thematic coherence have meant that we have had to limit the scope of this volume in various ways. We have chosen to focus above all on those areas where Catholic minorities or majorities found themselves in contention with liberal or secularising forces. It has thus not been possible to incorporate the Scandinavian countries or Russia, although analogous debates over the place of religion in public life took place in both. Readers may be surprised to find that we have not included chapters on Ireland and Poland. There are two reasons for this. The first is that neither was a sovereign state during the period covered in this book. The struggle between legislatures, executives and constituencies that was a defining feature of the culture wars thus took place within the framework of other states – Prussia-Germany and Austria in Poland's case (conditions in Russian Poland being such as to prevent the triangulation of the conflict in this sense), and Britain in the case of Ireland. More important, however, is the fact that the conditions of 'foreign' dominion obtaining in these two nations on the opposite peripheries of Catholic Europe militated against the unfolding of a culture war in the sense explored in this volume. Neither in Poland nor in Ireland was the Catholic identity of the nation plausibly contested by a powerful secular

or heterodox competitor (despite the presence of Protestant Irish patriots in the emergent Irish nationalist movement). In both cases, the divisive questions posed by the culture wars in other states were overshadowed by the quest for national autonomy or independence.

The title of this book will inevitably evoke parallels with the 'culture wars' fought out within Anglo-American academia during the 1990s over such bones of contention as multi-culturalism, the literary canon and 'political correctness'. Some of the specific policy questions on which these debates have turned – the conflict between the suburb and the inner city in huge conurbations, for example, or the explosive relationship between race and education in underprivileged urban ghettos⁴ – would be quite alien to the protagonists who feature in this book. Yet there are also some striking connections. James Davidson Hunter, the writer generally credited with coining the term 'culture wars' in the 1980s, has himself declared that it was devised in order to evoke the 'similarities and dissimilarities between our own time and that of the German *Kulturkampf*'.⁵ 'Culture wars' is of course a mistranslation of *Kulturkampf*, but for our purposes this is precisely its virtue: it captures the essence of the German without replicating it and thus lends itself to a far more encompassing application than the term *Kulturkampf* would bear.

There are also many thematic parallels. The meaning of marriage, for example, is at stake for those who have resisted calls for the legal recognition of non-marital relationships in the 1990s, just as it was for the exponents and opponents of civil marriage in the 1870s. The recent controversy over the inclusion of Darwinian or creationist material in school textbooks would have struck a chord with those nineteenth-century Europeans who demanded confessional schools, or fought to drive the religious orders out of primary and secondary education. Now as then, the meanings of 'culture' have been contested; the dyad culture/civilisation, manifested in the putative opposition between 'multi-culturalism' and 'western civilisation' would have been perfectly intelligible to those nineteenth-century observers who saw themselves as participants in a struggle for national 'cultures' against the European 'civilisation' of Catholicism.⁶ In the 1990s, as in the 1880s,

⁴ On these, see Joseph A. Rodriguez, *City Against Suburb. The Culture Wars in an American Metropolis* (Westport, Conn., 1999), esp. 3–14; Robin D. G. Kelley, *Yo' Mama's Disfunktional. Fighting the Culture Wars in Urban America* (Boston, 1997), esp. 4–12.

⁵ James Davidson Hunter, *Culture Wars. The Struggle to Define America. Making Sense of the Battles over Family, Art, Education, Law and Politics* (New York, 1991), xii.

⁶ On the culture–civilisation dyad, see Joan de Jean, *Ancients against Moderns. Culture Wars and the Making of a Fin de Siècle* (Chicago, 1997), x; on the contestation of the meaning of culture more generally, see Gregory Melleuish, *The Packaging of Australia. Politics and Culture Wars* (Sydney, 1998), 9.

the conflict was framed, somewhat misleadingly, as a stand-off between the forces of tradition and those of transformation. There was a tendency then as now to slip into martial metaphors: 'cultural combatants', 'canon fodder' (*sic*), 'ghetto wars' and 'textbook battles' in the 1990s; 'Jesuit infiltration', 'fortress', 'bastions', 'campaign' and 'black battalions' in the 1880s.⁷ In both eras, the assumption that the integrity of national cultures was at stake ensured that ostensibly quite circumscribed issues could become contentious symbols of a greater struggle. It has been observed, moreover, of the 1990s that 'differences are often intensified and aggravated by their presentation in public', thanks to a 'media technology' that 'gives public discussion a life and logic of its own'.⁸ Precisely the same can be said for the last decades of the nineteenth century. These contemporary resonances are welcome inasmuch as they sharpen our awareness of the public passions that are stirred 'on those rare occasions when society goes to war over culture'.⁹

If the issues contested in late nineteenth-century Europe remain alive – albeit in different forms – at the outset of the twenty-first century, the same applies *a fortiori* to those South Asian and Middle-Eastern societies in which secular elites have come under pressure from growing religious movements. That there are parallels between the conflicts analysed in this book and developments in nineteenth-century Latin America and the nineteenth- and twentieth-century non-Christian world is beyond doubt. Within the orbit of Islam and Hinduism, modernising intellectuals like Sayyid Ahmad Khan or Mohammad Abduh, who pioneered the critical historical study of religion or expounded the primacy of reason, posed a challenge to traditional religious elites. At the same time, efforts were underway within Islam to impose greater uniformity in religious schools through curricular reform, while improved communications facilitated the emergence of the great mosque at Cairo, al-Azhar, as an internationally authoritative teaching institution. Even within the much less centralised culture of Hinduism, nineteenth-century religious authorities strove, not without success, to bring local devotional practices into closer conformity with temple-based religion. 'Almost everywhere', Christopher Bayly has written, 'the world religions sharpened and clarified their identities', expanding to 'absorb and discipline . . . variegated systems of belief, ritual and practice'.¹⁰

⁷ On this tendency, see Todd Gitlin, *The Twilight of Common Dreams. Why America is Wracked by Culture Wars* (New York, 1995), 1, 13; Michael Keefer, *Lunar Perspectives. Field Notes from the Culture Wars* ([Canada], 1996), vii.

⁸ Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 34. ⁹ De Jean, *Ancients Against Moderns*, ix.

¹⁰ Christopher A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World. Global Interactions 1780–1914* (Oxford, 2003). I am grateful to Professor Bayly for making a draft version of this text available to me.

The consequence for many societies has been an ongoing conflict over the role of religion in politics, law and public space, even after the establishment of emphatically secular political orders, as in Turkey (1923) or India (1947). An exploration of these linkages lies beyond the scope of this book. But their existence alone reminds us that the religious conflicts still troubling so many of the world's societies are less exotic to modern 'western' political culture than we are often encouraged to believe.¹¹

¹¹ The most egregious influence in this respect has been that of Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York, 1996).

CHAPTER I

The New Catholicism and the European culture wars

Christopher Clark

The history of Catholic societies in nineteenth-century Europe was marked by the paradoxical intertwining of two transformative processes: secularisation and religious revival. On the one hand, church properties were seized and sold off; ecclesiastical privileges were removed; clerical authorities came under pressure to retreat from their positions in education and charitable provision; and liberal, national, radical and socialist political discourses were marked by an uncompromisingly anticlerical rhetoric. At the same time, however, this era saw a flowering of Catholic religious life across Europe. There was a proliferation and elaboration of popular devotions, church buildings, religious foundations and associations, and confessionally motivated newspapers and journals. This revitalisation of religious energies coincided with profound changes within the church itself. The New Catholicism of later nineteenth-century Europe was more uniform, more centralised, and more 'Roman' than the eighteenth-century church had been. It was marked by a convergence of elite and popular devotions, an interpenetration of lay and clerical organisation, a rhetorical vehemence and a resourcefulness in the management of communicative media that impressed contemporaries, whether sympathetic or hostile.

These transformations were a crucial precondition for the 'culture wars' that polarised European societies in the later nineteenth century. There had always been intermittent friction and conflict between church and state in western Europe. But the all-encompassing ideological and political struggles of the later nineteenth century would have been inconceivable had the church not acquired the means to mobilise its support base and to mount effective campaigns against its adversaries. This chapter thus focuses on the developments that shaped the New Catholicism of nineteenth-century Europe and defined the character of the battles it fought. In doing so, it aims to get to grips with two general problems.

I would like to thank Professor D. E. D. Beales, Professor Olaf Blaschke, Dr Nina Lübbren and Dr John A. Thompson for their comments on an earlier draft of this chapter.

The first concerns the dynamics of change within European Catholicism as a social and cultural system. Where did the pressure for change come from? Did it originate with Rome and feed down through the hierarchy via the 'papalist' orders, as some accounts would suggest, or were forces on the periphery also involved? Were the changes clerically led, or were autonomous lay impulses also implicated? While acknowledging the impact of the initiatives launched by the curia, this chapter argues that the external pressures brought to bear on Catholic networks and communities across Europe throughout the century generated parallel processes of lay and clerical mobilisation that in turn created potentially destabilising cross-currents within the Catholic system. The campaign waged by the curia to secure central control, give 'Catholicism' a stable and clearly defined ideological content and homogenise Catholic devotional and associational cultures was in part driven by the need to capture and contain these currents. The 'Romanisation' of nineteenth-century Catholicism was thus a rather less tidy process than is implied by those contemporary anticlerical images of fanatically obedient Jesuits herding servile Catholic masses that are discussed in Wolfram Kaiser's contribution to this book.

Our second problem concerns the relationship between the developments underway within the Catholic camp and broader processes of historical change. Contemporary liberal and anticlerical publicists framed the culture wars as a struggle between 'modernity' and a reactionary, backward-looking worldview that had no legitimate place in a modern society. To a striking degree, an implicit antinomy between modernity and 'tradition' still informs the way we think about this conflict.¹ One of the reasons for this is that the teleological, secular concept of 'progress' celebrated by the nineteenth-century liberals lives on in the 'modernisation theory' whose assumptions have underwritten some of the best writing on the European history of this era. The days are long past when historians conceived of modernisation in terms of a linear decline in religion, but there is still a tendency to view the phenomenon of religious revival as a detour, a distraction, from the 'norm' of an irreversible process of secularisation. As a consequence, the history of Catholic revival and mobilisation becomes wholly or partly detached from the history of European modernity, as if it

¹ On this problem, see David Blackbourn, 'Progress and Piety: Liberals, Catholics and the State in Bismarck's Germany', in David Blackbourn, *Populists and Patricians. Essays in Modern German History* (London, 1987), 143–67; and David Blackbourn, 'The Catholic Church in Europe Since the French Revolution', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 33 (1991), 778–90. For a trenchant example of the persistence of 'backwardness' as a way of thinking about nineteenth-century Catholicism, see Oded Heilbrunner, 'From Ghetto to Ghetto: The Place of German Catholic Society in Recent Historiography', *Journal of Modern History* 72 (2000), 453–95.

inhabited a simultaneous but parallel universe. Catholic mobilisation and societal modernisation are seen as antipathetic and mutually undermining principles; the one's gain is the other's loss.

This chapter takes issue with the view that the culture wars amounted to a stand-off between 'regression' or 'tradition' on the one hand, and the forces of 'modernity' on the other. Liberalism, anticlericalism and socialist secularism were all artefacts of political modernity, but so was the New Catholicism, with its networks of voluntary associations, newspapers, mass-produced imagery and mass demonstrations. Like its contemporaries, socialism and nationalism, the New Catholicism was deeply implicated in that epochal sharpening of collective identities that reshaped political cultures across Europe. The political universe we now inhabit is not the outgrowth of any one of these antagonists alone, but the consequence of an intermittently acrimonious but ultimately fruitful argument among them. For the fundamental problem that faced all the great ideological formations of late nineteenth-century Europe was not whether to embrace or reject 'modernity' but how best to respond to the challenges it posed. The relationship between the New Catholicism and its various antagonists should thus rather be seen in terms of competing programmes for the management of rapid political and social change.

REVIVAL

The religious revival of the early and middle decades of the nineteenth century followed a nadir in the fortunes of the church. The Enlightenment had seen a secularisation in literary tastes, the expulsion of the Jesuits from many European states and their subsequent suppression (under pressure) by the pope himself. At the same time, there were strivings in many parts of the episcopate in central and western Europe for 'national' ecclesiastical autonomy and – especially in the Habsburg Monarchy during the 1780s – a dramatic escalation of state interference in the management of church resources. The era of the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars brought waves of wholesale secularisation, the suppression of many religious foundations, the abolition of the ecclesiastical principalities and the imposition in many states of more extensive regimes of control and supervision over ecclesiastical activities.

The early and middle decades of the nineteenth century nevertheless saw a massive expansion of confessional commitment among the Catholic populations of Europe and the emergence of a more cohesive and Rome-centred clergy. There was a spectacular rise in the numbers of persons entering holy orders and a proliferation of new religious houses, evangelising

missions and devotional associations. Many areas witnessed a sharp and sustained upswing in the rate of lay observance. There was a surge in popular pilgrimages to established and new holy sites. The era of growth and revitalisation was associated with the rapid diffusion of a mode of piety marked inwardly by an emphasis on mystery, miracle and immediacy of experience, and outwardly by a partiality for highly demonstrative – even provocative – collective acts of devotion. These developments unfolded on a scale that dwarfed the incipient revivals of the late Enlightenment.

In some ways, the blows dealt out to ecclesiastical institutions and personnel during the revolutionary and Napoleonic eras and sporadically across Europe thereafter may actually have laid the ground for the later revival. The trauma of revolution and de-Christianisation in France shaped the contours of the subsequent revival, polarising communities around the choice between collaboration and resistance and generating more ‘baroque’ and communally based forms of piety than had been the norm at the end of the *ancien régime*.² The ‘Organic Articles’ imposed unilaterally by the French administration as a supplement to the Concordat of 1801 and subsequently imitated in other European states, were conceived with the chief aim of subordinating clerical structures to state control. But they also had the effect, through the introduction of standardised training and state-subsidised salaries, of creating a more cohesive and integrated clergy. By seeking to confine the activity of the clergy to its core religious functions and redistributing church incomes towards parochial provision, secularising regimes encouraged the development of more close-knit relationships between the clergy and the faithful. The confiscation and resale of ecclesiastical property and the abolition of the old ecclesiastical principalities had an analogous effect, since it narrowed what had once been a vast wealth gap between the upper and lower clergy.³ Confiscations also worked in favour of a more Rome-dominated clergy, since they undermined the autonomy of the great French and German bishoprics whose incumbents had

² M. Vovelle, *The Revolution Against the Church: From Reason to the Supreme Being* (Cambridge, 1991); S. Desan, *Reclaiming the Sacred. Lay Religion and Popular Politics in Revolutionary France* (Ithaca, 1990); O. Hufton, ‘The Reconstruction of a Church 1796–1801’, in C. Lucas and G. Lewis, *Beyond the Terror. Essays in French Regional and Social History 1794–1815* (Cambridge, 1983).

³ I am indebted to Hazel Mills for sharing with me her unpublished research on Catholic revival in the French regions. On the other issues raised, see R. Gibson, *A Social History of French Catholicism 1789–1914* (London, 1989), 78–80; D. Beales, ‘Joseph II and the Monasteries of Austria and Hungary’, in N. Aston (ed.), *Religious Change in Europe, 1650–1914* (Oxford 1997), 161–84, here 162; on the wealth gap, J. McManners, *The French Revolution and the Church* (London, 1969), 18, 39; J. McManners, *Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France*, vol. I: *The Clerical Establishment and its Social Ramifications* (Oxford, 1998), 216–17, 308, 332–46. On the popular impact of secularising measures: C. M. Naselli, *La soppressione napoleonica delle corporazioni religiose. Contributo alla storia religiosa del primo ottocento italiano 1808–1814* (Rome, 1986), 203–5.

traditionally been so resistant to encroachments from the curia. These indirect stimuli to revival were supplemented in some states after 1815 by 'restorative' measures whose purpose was to encourage the expansion of clerical activity – especially missions – as a means of legitimating authority and neutralising political discontent.

These enabling conditions are well known, but the phenomenon of revival itself remains elusive. When exactly did it start? Did it take off in the 1850s, as some historians have argued? Was it already underway in the 1830s, or did it perhaps involve the gradual consolidation of a process of renewal that was already in evidence at the end of the eighteenth century?⁴ Particularly difficult is the question of the balance of forces driving religious revival. Was it clerically inspired, or did it bubble up unbidden from below? Were the faithful 'mobilised' by the clergy, or was clerical activism 'demand-driven'? The complexities that beset any effort to answer this question can be illustrated by reference to one of the most celebrated manifestations of Catholic mass devotion in the post-Napoleonic era, the Trier pilgrimage of 1844. In the space of a few weeks, some 500,000 Catholic pilgrims converged on the city of Trier (population *c.* 20,000), lured by the opportunity to view and venerate the robe reputed by local tradition to have been worn by Christ until his crucifixion. The pilgrimage demonstrated, among other things, the enhanced authority of the clergy among the masses of the faithful – whereas late eighteenth-century pilgrimages had tended to be anarchic,

⁴ Emmet Larkin's influential analysis of devotional revival in Ireland after 1850 ('The Devotional Revolution in Ireland, 1850–1875', *American Historical Review* 77 (1972), 625–52) has been much challenged; see, e.g., T. K. Hoppen, *Elections, Politics and Society in Ireland 1832–1885* (Oxford, 1984), 171, 173, 197–211, which argues that revival was well underway by 1850. Historians of German Catholicism likewise disagree over the periodisation of revival: J. Sperber, *Popular Catholicism in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Princeton, N.J., 1984) favours the 1850s and 1860s, whereas Christoph Weber, *Aufklärung und Orthodoxie am Mittelrhein, 1820–1850* (Munich, 1973) and M. L. Anderson, 'Piety and Politics: Recent Work on German Catholicism', *Journal of Modern History* 63 (1991), 681–716, both date the beginnings of revival to the 1830s and 1840s. Over the last two decades, a revisionist historiography has shown that the image of the late Enlightenment as a period of helter-skelter retreat for Catholicism is misleading. Louis Chatellier and others have argued that this period saw an expansion of missionary activity, through which 'Catholicism became, more than it ever had been, a mass phenomenon', especially among rural populations. In the 1760s and 1770s, there was a new wave of popular devotions and cults – to the Sacred Heart, the Immaculate Virgin, or around the person of the pious illiterate mendicant Benoît Labre, popularly acclaimed as a saint on his death in Rome in 1783. In this era, as later, these devotions received papal support and women played a prominent role in consolidating them in popular practice. Yet the impact of these trends upon the church as a whole remained limited, partly because of ambivalence and institutional rivalries among the lesser clergy and partly because of the profound distrust and distaste with which an influential sector of the European episcopate viewed such manifestations of popular piety. For samples of this literature, see L. Chatellier (ed.), *Religions en transition dans la seconde moitié du XVIII^e siècle* (Voltaire Foundation Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century, 2000: 02), (Oxford, 2000), esp. 74, 138, 230. A useful brief overview of some of the issues raised by Catholic revival is D. Blackburn, 'The Catholic Church in Europe since the French Revolution'.

ill-disciplined affairs, the Trier pilgrims appeared in well-ordered ranks, under the supervision of their priests.

In a classic account of these events, the German historian Wolfgang Schieder discerned in the Trier pilgrimage evidence of a counter-revolutionary alliance between Catholic clergy and the Prussian authorities, whose purpose was to 'channel' latent social discontents into a politically harmless act of collective devotion. According to this view, the role of the clergy was essentially manipulative.⁵ By contrast, others have highlighted the popular dimension of the Trier pilgrimage. Many of the parish clergy were themselves 'representatives of the people' in the sense that they hailed from families of humble status, and enthusiasm for this demonstrative act of collective veneration drew on widespread Rhenish Catholic hostility towards the Protestant administration of the kingdom of Prussia. Pilgrimages had in any case traditionally been more popular with the people than with the clergy, who had tended to see them as occasions for disorder and misbehaviour.⁶

These viewpoints reflect divergent emphases and perspectives in the historiography,⁷ but they are not mutually exclusive. Clerical initiatives were crucial to the organisational boom that occurred within European Catholicism during the middle decades of the century. But they were not imposed upon an unwilling populace. Indeed they could only succeed by tapping and responding to 'popular' demand. In France, where there has been much detailed research on revival in the localities, it is clear that the new devotional culture was substantially lay-driven and that women often played a prominent role. In some areas, new veneration even flourished despite the scepticism of the local clergy. In the small town of Arbois in the Jura, for example, a group of laywomen revived a religious association (Dames de Charité) without any support whatsoever from the local priest, a former revolutionary juror.⁸ It has long been acknowledged that German

⁵ W. Schieder, 'Kirche und Revolution. Sozialgeschichtliche Aspekte der trierer Wallfahrt von 1844', in *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 14 (1974), 419–54.

⁶ Rudolf Lill, 'Kirche und Revolution. Zu den Anfängen der katholischen Bewegung im Jahrzehnt vor 1848', *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 18 (1978), 565–75; Andreas Holzem, *Kirchenreform und Sektienstiftung. Deutschkatholiken, Reformkatholiken und Ultramontane am Oberrhein (1844–1866)* (Paderborn, 1994), 6, 13–17.

⁷ Sperber (*Popular Catholicism*) sees the western German revival as essentially clerically driven; Emmett Larkin ('Devotional Revolution'), likewise, stresses the role of the hierarchy (esp. Cullen), in stimulating Irish revival. For contrasting views that see the activism of the clergy more as a 'symptom' than an 'agent' of revival, see M. L. Anderson, 'The Limits of Secularisation: On the Problem of the Catholic Revival in Nineteenth-Century Germany', *Historical Journal* 38 (1995), 647–70; Hoppen, *Elections*, 173, 211.

⁸ I am grateful to Hazel Mills for drawing my attention to the Dames de Charité in Arbois.

Catholic revival after 1850 owed much to the remarkable expansion in missionary activity by the Jesuit, Redemptorist and Franciscan orders in the German states. But here too demand preceded supply: already during the pre-March, when the government of Baden and Prussia prohibited such missions on their territory, it had been common for western German Catholics to travel across the borders in order to attend missionary events in Alsace and Belgium. The same pattern can be observed in the rapid spread of 'May venerations' of the Virgin across Catholic Europe between the 1820s and the 1850s. The May venerations were propagated in many areas by local religious houses, but such was their popularity that some parochial clergy were obliged to introduce them under pressure from their congregations. The proliferation of such devotions was thus a somewhat haphazard process that depended less upon impulses from the senior clergy than upon local conditions. Where parish priests were flexible enough to cater to demand from the community, the resulting success was often sufficient to trigger emulation from clergy and faithful in nearby areas.⁹

What was significant, then, about the Trier pilgrimage and other such acts of collective devotion in the post-Napoleonic era was not the imposition of clerical control as such, but a potent convergence of clerical activism at many levels with a revitalised popular piety, a 'rediscovery' as one historian has put it, of Catholic popular religion.¹⁰ One of the most interesting features of nineteenth-century Catholic revival is the extent to which it drew on extra-sacerdotal forms of worship and experience – pilgrimage, rosarial devotions, visionary encounters with divine persons.¹¹ Another distinctive feature was the rise of certain formerly local cults to integrative, supra-regional devotions with a mass base.¹²

⁹ O. Weiss, *Die Redemptoristen in Bayern (1790–1809). Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Ultramontanismus* (St Ottilien, 1983); Kurt Küppers, 'Die Maiandacht als Beispiel volksnaher Frömmigkeit', *Römische Quartalschrift* 81 (1986), 102–12, here 104.

¹⁰ Antonius Liedhegener, *Christentum und Urbanisierung. Katholiken und Protestanten in Münster und Bochum 1830–1933* (Paderborn, 1997), 103–6, 570. Other historians who emphasise the importance of popular piety (as opposed to clerical leadership) to the cohesion of the German Catholic milieu include Josef Mooser, 'Katholische Volksreligion, Klerus und Bürgertum in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts: Thesen', in W. Schieder (ed.), *Religion und Gesellschaft im 19. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 1993), 144–56 and Siegfried Weichlein, 'Konfession und Region: Katholische Milieubildung am Beispiel Fuldas', in O. Blaschke and F.-M. Kuhlemann (eds.), *Religion im Kaiserreich. Milieus, Mentalitäten, Krisen* (Gütersloh, 1996), 193–232. On the same phenomenon in Spain, see William J. Callahan, *Church, Politics and Society in Spain, 1750–1874* (Cambridge, Mass., 1984), 231–6.

¹¹ Frances Lannon, *Privilege, Persecution and Prophecy. The Catholic Church in Spain, 1875–1975* (Oxford, 1987), 22–3, 28–9; Ruth Harris, *Lourdes. Body and Spirit in the Secular Age* (London, 1999); David Blackburn, *Marpingen. Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Bismarckian Germany* (Oxford, 1993).

¹² Olaf Blaschke, 'Das 19. Jahrhundert: Ein Zweites Konfessionelles Zeitalter?', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 26 (2000), 38–75, here 45.

Ordinary Catholics were 'subjects', not just 'objects' of the new devotional culture that resulted.¹³ The same point could be made with regard to the dramatic growth of women's congregations, which was driven by the aspiration of many peasant and working-class women to participate in the work of new communities of 'sisters' whose commitment to social action distinguished them from the enclosed orders of contemplative nuns that had been the norm under the *ancien régime*. 'Religious life', as Theodore K. Hoppen has observed, 'does not change merely in response to Episcopal command. Revolutions in outlook and behaviour, in practice and belief, depend ultimately upon deeper shifts in the practices of a community and in the relationships within it.'¹⁴ For these reasons, it is perhaps unhelpful to conceptualise revival around a dichotomy between clerical and lay initiative. In many localities, the clergy was itself divided – some supporting the new emotive devotional culture, while others kept their distance. Our conclusions on these matters must in any case remain tentative. The historiography of Catholic revival remains extremely patchy – we still know much more about clerical activism than we do about popular religiosity and much work is still to be done, both on the local roots of the new devotional trends, and on the networks that allowed new or revived practices to consolidate themselves at regional, national and European level.

THE ASCENDANCY OF ROME

Although it would be mistaken to see the upswing in popular devotions in terms of the systematic implementation of a policy concept emanating from Rome, it is nonetheless clear that the new trend was closely associated with the increasingly Roman orientation of the clergy and of the faithful more generally. The 'papalist' orders – especially the Jesuits – were prominently involved in the propagation of the May devotions and of the cult of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which in turn was closely linked, after 1859, with the cause of the pope in his struggle with the Italian state. Furthermore, endorsements from the papacy were crucial in providing new and revived devotions – and the associations that supported them – with a secure place in the life of the church.¹⁵ The popes also played a central role in supporting the spread of Marian devotions. The most dramatic example of a papal

¹³ See N. Busch, 'Fromme Westfalen. Zur Sozial- und Mentalitätsgeschichte des Herz-Jesu-Kultes zwischen Kulturkampf und Erstem Weltkrieg', *Westfälische Zeitschrift* 144 (1984), 329–50, here 348.

¹⁴ Hoppen, *Elections*, 211.

¹⁵ Busch, 'Fromme Westfalen', 329–50, here 332; for other examples of papal support for pious associations, see also O. Heim, *Die katholischen Vereine im deutsch-sprachigen Österreich 1848–1855* (Salzburg, 1990), 113, 163, 173, 175, 203, 223.

intervention along these lines was the definition by Pius IX on 8 December 1854 of the Immaculate Conception of Mary as Catholic doctrine. This initiative was marked by a dialectical interlocking of curial authority with popular aspirations that was characteristic for the mid-century papacy. On the one hand, the declaration signalled a qualitative leap in the pope's capacity to exercise doctrinal authority without formal consultation of his bishops – in this respect, the declaration of 1854 foreshadowed the later formal promulgation of papal infallibility. On the other hand, the Immaculate Conception had long been a popular devotional theme among Catholics in Europe and Pius IX made extensive enquiries into the state of Catholic opinion before proceeding to define it as dogma.¹⁶

The 'Romanisation' of the nineteenth-century church was a complex process that was driven at different levels by a range of internal and external pressures. Some have seen it as an essentially coercive enterprise, in which dissenting clergy were disciplined, discriminated against and hounded from positions of influence.¹⁷ There is something to be said for this perspective. The curia certainly supported that loose network of 'ultramontane' Catholic clerical and lay activists who championed the rights of Rome over those both of the state and of the 'national' church hierarchies and it also made use of all available resources to discredit, isolate and sabotage the opposing camp.¹⁸

Yet a top-down paradigm can only partially capture the complexity of the process. The career of the ultramontane movement throughout Europe indicates that powerful voluntarist forces were at work. Ultramontanism profited, for example, from the remarkable surge in female religious vocations that accompanied the mid-century Catholic revival.¹⁹ The curia

¹⁶ On Immaculate Conception, see Owen Chadwick, *A History of the Popes 1830–1914* (Oxford, 1998), 119–23; G. Martina, *Pio IX (1867–1878)* (Rome, 1990), 118; Roger Aubert, Johannes Beckmann, Patrick J. Corish and Rudolf Lill, *The Church in the Age of Liberalism*, trans. Peter Becker (London, 1981), 307; on the populist dimension of the new doctrine, see also T. Kselman, *Miracles, Magic and Prophecy in Nineteenth-Century France* (New York, 1983).

¹⁷ In addition to the studies cited above in n. 5, see I. Götz von Olenhusen, *Klerus und abweichendes Verhalten. Zur Sozialgeschichte katholischer Priester im 19. Jahrhundert: Die Erzdiözese Freiburg* (Göttingen, 1994), 21.

¹⁸ The term 'ultramontane' (literally 'beyond the mountains' refers to those Catholics in northern, central and western Europe who looked beyond the Alps towards Rome for leadership and authority. The validity of the term as a historical category is questioned in C. Weber, 'Ultramontanismus als katholischer Fundamentalismus', in W. Loth (ed.), *Deutscher Katholizismus im Umbruch zur Moderne* (Stuttgart, 1991), 20–45, here 20, 36. However, Weber's proposal that the term 'fundamentalism' be adopted in place of ultramontanism also raises problems, and his remains a minority view.

¹⁹ There is a substantial and growing literature on the role of women in Catholic revival; see, for example, C. Clear, *Nuns in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Washington D.C., 1988); C. Langlois, *Le catholicisme au féminin. Les congrégations françaises à supérieure générale au XIXe siècle* (Paris, 1984); I. Götz von Olenhusen (ed.), *Wunderbare Erscheinungen. Frauen und Frömmigkeit im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Paderborn, 1995).

might, as in mid-century Ireland, be drawn into a more interventionist role by conflicts within the episcopate and appeals to Rome for arbitration. In many areas, it was above all the younger, lesser or rural clergy who mobilised around the ultramontane agenda against an older generation of enlightened, Jansenist, Gallican or Febronian churchmen whose political and ecclesiastical formation dated back to the closing years of the eighteenth century. The movement thus drew at least some of its energy from tensions generated by deep social and institutional cleavages within the clergy.²⁰

The spread of ultramontanism was also assisted by factors external to the church and beyond its control. Aggressive intervention by the state, for example, could trigger a collective reorientation towards Rome. In 1841–3, when the liberal government of Spain set about creating a national church under state control, prompting a formal protest from Gregory XVI, the consequence was a wave of outrage articulated in the battle cry ‘Rome is our goal! Rome is our hope!’ and an unprecedented ultramontane mobilisation among the parochial clergy.²¹ The same pattern could be observed in the Prussian Rhineland during the 1830s, where a clash between the Prussian authorities and the archbishop of Cologne triggered not only mass protest demonstrations in the city, but also a dramatic and lasting mobilisation of Romanist allegiances, manifested in the rapid proliferation of ultramontane journals and newspapers throughout the Rhineland.²² Even where it did not culminate in such dramatic conflict, interference by state administrations in the internal affairs of the church tended to have a polarising effect on the clergy, since it opened a divide – sometimes embittered by careerist rivalries – between those clerics who were inclined to collaborate in, or stood to benefit from, state initiatives and those who opposed them on the grounds that they endangered the autonomy of the church.²³

Ultramontane views also enjoyed widespread support among lay European Catholics. In this connection it is important to remember that ultramontanism was a ‘broad church’ that embraced a range of constituencies.

²⁰ Götz von Olenhusen has shown that ultramontanism in Baden was supported above all by clergy from rural backgrounds, *Klerus*, 133, 136–7; on the generational structure of ultramontanism within the Rhenish clergy, see Liedhegener, *Christentum*, 126, Holzem, *Kirchenreform*, 200; on ultramontanism in France as a movement of protest against bishops, see Roger Aubert, *Le pontificat de Pie IX (1846–1878)* (Paris, 1963), 343. For a powerful concise rejoinder to top-down interpretations of ultramontanism, see M. L. Anderson, ‘The Limits of Secularization: On the Problem of the Catholic Revival in Nineteenth-Century Germany’, *Historical Journal* 38 (1995), 647–70; esp. 655–6.

²¹ Callahan, *Church, Politics and Society in Spain*, 169–72; also Lannon, *Privilege, Persecution and Prophecy*, 2; S. J. Payne, *Spanish Catholicism. An Historical Overview* (Madison, 1984), 98.

²² Bernhard Schneider, *Katholiken auf den Barrikaden? Europäische Revolutionen und deutsche Katholische Presse 1815–1848* (Paderborn, 1998), 52–4; Aubert et al., *Church*, 32, 53–6.

²³ Callahan, *Church, Politics and Society in Spain*, 169; Chadwick, *Popes*, 163–4.

At one end of the spectrum were reactionary integralists like Louis Veuillot, whose worldview was essentially absolutist and theocratic; at the other were those lay and clerical progressives for whom the ultramontane cause was consonant to some degree with liberal principles and denoted the emancipation of an international church from oppressive state control. As Owen Chadwick has observed, the central 'paradox' of ultramontanistism was that 'an authoritarian pope could be invoked in the interest of the "liberty" of Catholics in the face of state interference'.²⁴ A state that pressed the church hard naturally strengthened the hand of the ultramontanes, since it alienated observant Catholics from those (anti-ultramontane) elements within the senior clergy who favoured a far-reaching accommodation to the demands of secular governments.²⁵

Finally, the ultramontane tendency drew on a powerful – and arguably unprecedented – allegiance among many European Catholics to the person of the pontiff. Devotions to the person of the pope first gained ground during the pontificates of Pius VI and Pius VII, when they were triggered by indignation at the harassment of the church authorities by a succession of anticlerical regimes. Their apogee came during the pontificate of Pius IX, when the annexation of the northern Papal States by the Kingdom of Piedmont/Italy and the reduction of the pope's temporal domains to a rump territory around Rome triggered outrage among Catholics. A wave of addresses to the pope followed, gathering 5,524,373 signatures. Although there was some covert encouragement from papal representatives, this mass demonstration of sympathy was largely spontaneous. Among the most dramatic expressions of Catholic solidarity with the pontiff was the revival – on a voluntary basis – of the levy known in the Middle Ages as the 'Peter's Pence' (*deniers de Saint-Pierre*, *Peterspfennig*, *obolo di San Pietro*). This movement appears to have begun in 1859 when a Catholic journal in London reported that an Italian and a Pole resident in the city had sent a modest sum of money to offset the military costs incurred in defending the integrity of the Papal States. The gesture was widely imitated by lay Catholics, first in Vienna and Austria, then in Germany and later in France

²⁴ Chadwick, *Popes*, 38–9; Martina, *Pio IX (1867–1878)*, 131–2; Bruno Horaist, *La dévotion au pape et les catholiques français sous le pontificat de Pie IX (1846–1878) d'après les archives de la Bibliothèque Apostolique Vaticane* (Rome, 1995), 17; Harris, *Lourdes*, 118–28; Klaus Schatz, *Vaticanum I, 1869–1870*, 2 vols. (Paderborn, 1992), vol. I: *Vor der Eröffnung*, 21–2.

²⁵ In Switzerland, for example, pressure from this quarter in the early 1870s had the effect of closing down internal Catholic debate on infallibility and consolidating support for the line adopted at Vatican I. Urs Altermatt, *Der Weg der schweizer Katholiken ins Ghetto. Die Entstehungsgeschichte der nationalen Volksorganisationen im Schweizer Katholizismus 1848–1919*, 2nd edn (Zurich, 1991), 58.

and Belgium.²⁶ Although the Peter's Pence movement was encouraged by elements of the ultramontane clergy and by ultramontane press organs, it was driven above all by a spontaneous wave of lay activism in which women played a prominent role. Papalist voluntarism took other forms as well – Catholic military volunteers flocked to join the Zouave army of the pope during the 1860s, there were successive waves of mass petitions supporting the pope in his struggle with the Kingdom of Italy and there was a surge in pilgrimages to the Holy See, especially after the seizure of Lazio and Rome in 1870.²⁷

Ultramontane²⁸ propaganda sought to amplify and exploit this groundswell of support. After the events of 1870, an entire literature was dedicated to recounting in detail the suffering and 'poverty' of the pope. Many faithful Catholics responded to this message with imaginative acts of generosity, as this passage from a letter composed in 1877 by a Parisian woman demonstrates:

Permit your humble daughter, Holy Father, to offer You a little underclothing intended for your personal use: I have heard harrowing details of the deprivations of Your Holiness in this regard! and I am happy to alleviate your distress!²⁹

Ultramontane clergy and publicists sought not only to fashion solidarity out of outrage, but also to invest the person of the pope with an emblematic status. Catholics were encouraged to see in the suffering, despoliation, 'imprisonment' and 'martyrdom' of the pontiff the embodiment of the troubles currently afflicting the church. The pope's intransigence in negotiations with the Kingdom of Italy was likened to Christ's steadfastness in the face of Satan's blandishments. There was even a widespread tendency to equate the Sacred Heart of Jesus with the person of the 'suffering' pontiff.³⁰

²⁶ On the wave of addresses in 1859, see Vincent Viaene, 'The Roman Question. Catholic Mobilisation and Papal Diplomacy during the Pontificate of Pius IX (1846–1878)', in E. Lamberts (ed.), *The Black International. L'Internationale noire. 1870–1878*, Kadoc Studies XXIX (Leuven, 2002), 135–77, here 143; Giacomo Martina, *Pio IX (1851–1866)* (Rome, 1986), 22; Hartmut Benz, 'Der Peterspfennig im Pontifikat Pius IX. Initiativen zur Unterstützung des Papsttums (1859–1878)', *Römische Quartalschrift* 90 (1995), 90–109; on the personal charisma of this pope, see Schatz, *Vaticanum I*, II, 22.

²⁷ Pieter de Coninck, 'En Les uit Pruisen. Nederland en de Kulturkampf 1870–1880' (Ph.D. dissertation, Rijksuniversiteit Leiden, 1998), 48–9, 51–3; Roger Aubert, *Pie IX* (Paris, 1963), 88–90; Horaist, *Dévotion*, 22–5, 34–6, 43; Altermatt, *Der Weg*, 257–60.

²⁸ Some accounts use the term 'neo-ultramontane' to underline the distinctiveness of the extreme papalist phase of the movement. But since this term is not in universal use and does little to clarify the arguments advanced here, I have done without it. See Schatz, *Vaticanum I*, II, 29–34; Aubert *et al.*, *Church*, 312–15.

²⁹ Letter from Marie de Blair to the Holy See, Paris, 1877 cited in Horaist, *Dévotion*, 52.

³⁰ See, e.g., anon., 'Een feitelijke Ordeel der Wereld', *De Katholiek* 57 (January 1870); on the tendency to equate Pius IX with Christ (with references to the literature), see Schatz, *Vaticanum I*, I, 30.

But if the pope was a 'martyr' who embodied the contemporary sufferings of the church, he was also, in the eyes of many, the timeless incarnation of the eternal church. Narratives of suffering and deprivation thus alternated with images of beatific serenity:

He has never seemed to us more beautiful, more grand, more majestic, more radiant with the triple halo of the patriarch, the king and the pontiff [reports the *Correspondance de Genève* on the occasion of the pope's eightieth birthday]. An air of vigour, of health and even of freshness, made the more remarkable by the serene joy that illuminated his countenance, struck all eyes and reassured all hearts. Beneath his snow-white cap could be seen the even whiter hairs that were traced upon his venerable brow like a diadem of silver, and his smile replied with an expression of unutterable tenderness to the demonstrations of love that his children were bringing to him in abundance.³¹

The effect of such word-pictures was reinforced by evocative lithographic portraits whose mass distribution was facilitated by new techniques in cheap colour reproduction. By these means the ultramontanes conveyed a sense of proximity to the pope's person and concerns to those millions who would never acquire the means to travel to Rome. The pontiff came to encompass and signify the values for which the church was waging its culture war against the forces of secularisation, and the privations it was suffering as a consequence. The result – in the short term at least – was a drastic personalisation of authority that knew no contemporary parallel and anticipated in some respects the totalitarian cults of the twentieth century.

PRESS AND PUBLICITY

Newspapers and journals were the pre-eminent medium of the ultramontane transformation of European Catholicism. They were used in that sustained assault on contrary positions within the church that we might describe as the 'long culture war'. The primary task of the ultramontane press was to drive back and marginalise liberal and statist elements within Catholicism. But at the height of the culture wars it was also wielded with great effect against the outer opponents of the New Catholicism. Ultramontane journals framed mordant critiques of liberal regimes and the secular cultures that flourished under them; they supported Catholic politicians and parties and maintained solidarity and morale amongst the Catholic populations. In areas where Catholic associational life was relatively

³¹ Anon., 'Le 13 Mai', *Correspondance de Genève*, no. 69 (19 May 1871).

undeveloped, the press could play a crucial consciousness-raising role.³² Most importantly, perhaps, it created a discursive space that transcended national boundaries and nurtured the emergence of Europe-wide networks of communication and solidarity, so that Catholics in one country could – to an ever-increasing extent – be moved by the contemporaneous tribulations of co-religionists in another. However, although the ultramontane press defined itself to some extent by its support for the ascendancy of Rome, it was – with some exceptions – not the compliant organ of papal authority that the curia might have wished for. In this respect, as we shall see, it reflected the cross-currents and internal conflicts generated by Catholic revival and mobilisation.

One of the striking features of the early and mid-nineteenth-century Catholic press was the predominance of ultramontane journals. In the Italian states, the few Catholic titles successfully launched during the Restoration era were mainly of ultramontane inspiration.³³ In France, the single most important journal of Catholic opinion in the 1840s was *L'Univers*, initially founded by Abbé Migne in 1833 for purposes of general edification but subsequently transformed by its new editor-in-chief, Louis Veuillot, into the most combative and influential organ of European ultramontanism.³⁴ In Spain, the 'New Catholic press' of the 1840s – *La Revista Católica* of Barcelona, *El Católico* of Madrid and *La Cruz* of Seville – focused Catholic attention on incidents of government harassment and provided a forum for ultramontane opinion in the parishes.³⁵ In Germany, too, where a detailed survey has been made of the Catholic press in the Restoration era, journals of ultramontane orientation accounted for the lion's share of the ninety-five new titles launched between 1815 and 1847. While the 'liberal' and 'enlightened' sector stagnated or collapsed altogether during the church–state strife of the later 1830s, ultramontane titles proliferated, from ten in 1834 to twenty-five in 1839, thirty in 1844 and thirty-six in 1847.³⁶

These publications were for the most part fairly small enterprises serving a local readership. About half of the German Catholic journals published between 1815 and 1848 produced print-runs of under 1,000.³⁷ Even *L'Univers* had only 1,530 subscribers in 1840; *L'Amico Cattolico*, published in Milan

³² De Coninck, 'Een Les uit Pruisen', 273–9; Winfried Halder, *Katholische Vereine in Baden und Württemberg 1848–1914. Ein Beitrag zur Organisationsgeschichte des südwestdeutschen Katholizismus im Rahmen der Entstehung der modernen Gesellschaft* (Paderborn, 1995), 178; Callahan, *Church, Politics and Society in Spain*, 174; Aubert et al., *Church*, 56.

³³ Angelo Majo, *La stampa cattolica in Italia: Storia e documentazione* (Milan, 1992), 15–18.

³⁴ Aubert, *Pie IX*, 273–6; Harris, *Lourdes*, 118–20; Chadwick, *Popes*, 323–5.

³⁵ Callahan, *Church, Politics and Society in Spain*, 174.

³⁶ Schneider, *Katholiken*, 52. ³⁷ *Ibid.*, 75.

from 1841 in emulation of *L'Univers*, ran to only 500 copies. But these figures scarcely convey the significance of such publications. The readership of the key ultramontane journals was much larger than the print-run, since individual copies were widely circulated, either informally, or through Catholic reading societies like that of the Thiessingsche Buchhandlung in Münster, which offered access to twenty-one Catholic journals for a yearly subscription of only 3 thalers.³⁸ In addition to publicising ultramontane views on the key issues of the day, the new journals, though locally inspired and founded, helped to consolidate a Europe-wide sense of connectedness and solidarity among ultramontanes in different countries: there was extensive reprinting and translation of articles, and certain prominent issues such as the controversy surrounding the published works of the liberal ultramontane Félicité Lamennais were widely discussed in the Catholic journals of Belgium and the German states.³⁹

Perhaps the most distinctive and significant feature of the ultramontane press was the mixed lay-clerical character both of its personnel and of its readership. Some journals were run by clergymen, but others were independent lay initiatives. Contributing authors often included both priests and laymen, and many editors explicitly aimed to appeal both to clerical readers and to persons from the 'pious laity'. 'Laymen have become theologians and theologians have turned into journalists', the *Revue des Deux Mondes* observed in a report on the Catholic press in 1844.⁴⁰ This element of lay engagement and the mixed constituency that it helped to create were something new. The Catholic press was becoming a force in its own right, capable on the one hand of mobilising lay energies around clerically generated projects, but also on the other of critical public reflection on the activities (or lack thereof) of the hierarchy. This latter function was made explicit by the conservative and ultramontane publicist Johann Baptist Pfeilschifter, editor of the *Katholische Kirchen-Zeitung* (Aschaffenburg), who saw in the Catholic press a 'voice of the people' vis-à-vis the pastors of the church.⁴¹ There was clearly enormous potential here for tension with the diocesan authorities, especially in areas where the bishops did not share the views of the ultramontane press. Already in the 1840s there were instances where bishops appealed to the local secular authorities or even to Rome for disciplinary action against ultramontane journals, and such conflicts became more frequent and more intense as the ultramontane

³⁸ Chadwick, *Popes*, 324; Schneider, *Katholiken*, 83.

³⁹ Gerhard Valerius, *Deutscher Katholizismus und Lamennais. Die Auseinandersetzung in der katholischen Publizistik 1817–1854* (Mainz, 1983).

⁴⁰ Cited in Aubert *et al.*, *Church*, 56. ⁴¹ Schneider, *Katholiken*, 55, 67.

movement gathered momentum. In this sense, the growth of the ultramontane press shifted the balance of power between the clergy and the laity in the direction of the latter, introducing a new element of dynamism and instability into Catholic affairs.

Although there were occasional bursts of polemic from parts of the ultramontane press in the 1830s and 1840s, most journals strove to avoid political controversy and focused on religious questions in the narrower sense. The revolutions of 1848 produced a less restrained climate. The lifting of press restrictions in many countries encouraged the launching of new journals and removed some of the constraints on tone and content. More importantly, the secularising and sometimes anticlerical thrust of liberal demands across Europe opened a gap between liberals and ultramontanes that had previously been cloaked by a shared rhetoric of 'liberty' in the face of repressive state measures. In France, for example, as a liberal Catholic camp began to coalesce around the newspaper *L'Ére Nouvelle*, there were polemical blasts against the 'democratic-social' elements in contemporary Catholicism from Veuillot and other Catholic conservatives. In Italy, too, the ultramontane press now issued blanket condemnations of republicanism and nationalism and their fellow-travellers in clerical garb, expressed in a new mordant style exemplified by the writing of Don Giacomo Margotti, editor of the Turin paper *L'Armonia*.⁴² The note of intransigence and polemical sharpness sounded during the months of revolution was to remain a defining feature of much ultramontane publicistic activity.

It was only after 1848, under the pressure of the dramatic expansion in political print which accompanied the revolutions, that the papacy actually developed a broad-circulation press organ of its own. Several factors converged here. From the beginning of his reign, Pius IX was more flexible – if not positive – in his attitude to the press than his predecessor had been, and there were some tentative moves in the direction of a more relaxed press regime within the Papal States. The situation of acute instability created by the revolutions of 1848 brought home the need to correct potentially damaging misperceptions of his political intentions – late in April, for example, he issued an allocution to the cardinals urging them to refute rumours to the effect that he was encouraging the Catholics of Lombardy and Venetia to rise up against the Austrians. This was followed by a formal repudiation of 'all the newspaper articles that want the pope to be president of a new republic of all the Italians'. Later, during his exile in Gaeta, the pontiff

⁴² Full title: *L'Armonia della Religione colla Civiltà*; Majo, *Stampa cattolica*, 31–5.

issued a *motu proprio* urging bishops – for the first time – to defend ‘the truth’ through the press.⁴³

When Carlo Curci, a young Neapolitan Jesuit undergoing training in Rome, proposed that a moderately priced vernacular journal of broad cultural interest be founded to assist the curia in combating directly the spread of revolutionary ideas, the pope was receptive. The proposal was controversial, for the Constitution of St Ignatius forbade any involvement by the order in political affairs. It was opposed for this reason by Curci’s superior, the Jesuit General P. Roothaan, who had also been pressing for a new journal, but envisaged a much less accessible organ devoted to erudite subject matter and published in Latin. Pius IX preferred Curci’s option and even offered to take on the costs of the first issue. The result was the foundation in April 1850 of *Civiltà Cattolica*. Initially published in Naples, the paper was moved to Rome six months later, where it soon boasted a print-run of over 12,000. Considerable effort was invested to maximise the new journal’s public impact: some 120,000 programmes and 4,000 manifestos were distributed, and the first issue was widely announced in the Catholic press.⁴⁴

Civiltà Cattolica was a nominally independent, self-funding enterprise, yet it was produced under the close supervision of the curia and, in particular, of Pius IX himself, who frequently examined the proofs of the journal before publication. As a consequence, *Civiltà Cattolica* came to occupy a unique place in the panorama of the international press as the ‘semi-official voice of the Pope’.⁴⁵ There was a striking parallel here with developments elsewhere in Europe after the revolution. Like many other European sovereigns, Pius IX, having been forced to flee his own capital by a violent republican insurrection in November 1848, emerged from the upheavals of revolution with a heightened sense of the importance of the press and public opinion. Across Europe many regimes responded to this challenge by developing a more proactive, centralised and flexible press policy involving covert financial assistance and editorial manipulation of semi-autonomous press organs for which the epithet ‘semi-official’ – ‘*offiziös*’, ‘*officieux*’, ‘*officioso*’ – was widely used. *Civiltà Cattolica* thus exemplified to some extent the new post-revolutionary climate in European administration. Pius IX’s willingness to engage with public opinion has often been identified as a defining feature of his pontificate. He spoke more often

⁴³ Cited in Chadwick, *Popes*, 75–7.

⁴⁴ Majó, *Stampa cattolica*, 49; Aubert, *Pie IX*, 39; F. Dante, *Storia della ‘Civiltà Cattolica’ (1850–1891). Il laboratorio del Papa* (Rome, 1990), 57–63, 141–52.

⁴⁵ Dante, *Storia della ‘Civiltà Cattolica’*, 66, 67, 71.

impromptu to a greater variety of audiences than any of his predecessors had, and he was the first pontiff to see his speeches edited for publication. Since, with the advent of railways and faster long-distance shipping, a steadily growing mass of devout visitors converged on Rome each year, the pontiff's personal charisma and confidence in his own communicative gifts were of enormous importance in building an awareness of the special claims of the Holy See among European Catholics.

It would be going too far to say that these developments signalled the emergence of a modern papal 'publicity policy'. The pontiff's own views on the press remained deeply equivocal. On the one hand, the encyclical *Inter multiplices*, issued on 21 March 1853, was among the earliest documents of this kind to refer to Catholic journals in a way that implied that these could be of importance to the work of the church.⁴⁶ On the other hand, Pius IX himself remained antipathetic to freedom of the press in principle – in an unsigned document probably dating from 1856, he stressed the right of the government in his own states to take action against journalists who set out to denigrate it, and contrasted the papal regime favourably with 'the unlimited and so harmful freedom of the press that exists in the so-called free countries'.⁴⁷ By contrast with many other European regimes, the Holy See did not establish a centralised 'press bureau' in the immediate aftermath of 1848. No consistent effort was made to supply either clerical or lay activists with assistance in handling the controversies generated by announcements issuing from the Holy See.

The most striking example of this lackadaisical attitude to publicity management was the *Syllabus of Errors* (*Syllabus errorum*) of 1864 with its accompanying encyclical *Quanta cura*. The *Syllabus*, one of the most controversial utterances in the history of the papacy, was a composite, improvised document that was edited by many hands and was hurried to press without the pope's having checked the final version. Substantial parts of it had been cut and pasted wholesale from other documents in which various erroneous views had been condemned by Pius IX or his recent predecessors. The wording of Article 80, for example, which notoriously condemned the notion that the pope should reconcile himself with 'progress, liberalism and civilisation as lately introduced', derived from an earlier document denouncing the secularisation of education in the Kingdom of Piedmont, where it was clear that the reference was specifically to certain anticlerical initiatives. Shorn of their context, such broadly formulated denunciations,

⁴⁶ Martina, *Pio IX (1851–1866)*, 168; Chadwick, *Popes*, 324; the earlier encyclical *Nostris et nobiscum* (1849) had also touched on the positive role of the press; see Majo, *Stampa cattolica*, 23.

⁴⁷ Cited in Martina, *Pio IX (1851–1866)*, 6.

which bore directly upon the great political questions of the day, were guaranteed to provoke a furious response from the liberal press. And yet no guidelines – aside from the intemperate and unfocused text of the accompanying encyclical – were issued on how this troublesome document might be interpreted, justified to the faithful, or presented to the public; nor did the curia make any efforts at damage limitation. It fell to gifted and persuasive publicists like Bishop Dupanloup of Orléans and Bishop Ketteler of Mainz to contextualise and interpret the *Syllabus* in such a way as to reconcile sceptical Catholics to its theses.⁴⁸

It is clear nonetheless that the existence after 1848 of *Civiltà Cattolica* provided the pope with a potent means of influencing public opinion. On 1 June 1867, the journal ran a leading article entitled 'A New Tribute to Saint Peter', which argued that, having rendered up their tribute of gold (the Peter's Pence) and blood (the Zouave volunteer movement), Catholics should now offer the tribute of intellect (*tributo dell'intelletto*). This was to take the form of an oath to expound faithfully and if necessary to the point of martyrdom the infallibility of papal *ex-cathedra* pronouncements.⁴⁹ The article had a remarkable impact, especially in France, where fly-sheets bearing oaths to infallibility were distributed on the streets, and parish priests were pressed to add their signatures to petitions collected by laymen. In retrospect it is evident that this important gambit signalled a transition to concerted work towards the definition of infallibility at the Council of 1870. And yet, appearances notwithstanding, it did not derive from a papal initiative. As Klaus Schatz has shown, the 'threefold tribute' was in fact the inspiration of a young Jesuit studying in Rome. The editors adopted the idea and allowed the student (anonymously) to compose the article.⁵⁰ Pius IX subsequently welcomed the sentiments expressed, though he appears also to have been doubtful about whether the time was right for such forthright signals.⁵¹ The editor of *Civiltà*, Matteo Liberatore, later claimed that the function of his journal in the run-up to the Vatican Council had been essentially provocative: his aim was to goad the opponents of the papal

⁴⁸ On preparations for the *Syllabus*, see Frank J. Coppa, *Pius IX: Crusader in a Secular Age* (Boston, 1979), 140–53; Aubert *et al.*, *Church*, 293–9; on the defects of papal publicity management, J. Bachem, *Vorgeschichte, Geschichte und Politik der Zentrumsparthei. Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der katholischen Bewegung, sowie zur allgemeinen Geschichte des neueren und neuesten Deutschland, 1815–1914*, 9 vols. (Cologne, 1927–32), III, 52–3, 61; Chadwick, *Popes*, 176; Schatz, *Vaticanum I*, I, 32; for a similar damage limitation exercise in Austria in 1867, following an intemperate papal condemnation of recent Austrian laws, see Bachem, *Zentrumsparthei*, III, 81–2.

⁴⁹ 'Un nuovo tributo a S. Pietro', *Civiltà Cattolica* (1867), ser. 6, vol. X, 641–51.

⁵⁰ Schatz, *Vaticanum I*, I, 201–2.

⁵¹ G. G. Franco, *Appunti storici sopra il Concilio Vaticano (1870)*, ed. G. Martina (Rome, 1982), 233 (no. 422).

cause to leave their hiding-places and come out into the open, much as the hunting dog 'raises game, forcing it to pass before the eyes of the hunter'.⁵²

The question of whether the pope himself was involved in starting and steering such initiatives is in any case of secondary importance. For it was precisely the relative informality of papal press management – which allowed enthusiasts across Europe to 'work towards the pope' by anticipating his intentions – that unleashed forces that may well have been suppressed in a more tightly controlled regime. A good example of this principle in operation is the publication in the French press in June 1868 of a personal letter from Pius IX to Archbishop Darboy in Paris, admonishing him in sharp terms for his Gallicanism. It was subsequently revealed that the letter, which was taken up by the ultramontane press and used to scourge the archbishop in public, had been leaked by the Paris nuncio, Mgr Chigi, who had a copy of his own. It is extremely unlikely that this manoeuvre was personally authorised in advance by the pope, who categorically denied any involvement.⁵³ On the other hand, Chigi, himself an enthusiastic ultramontane who had long been an important agent of papal policy in France, will have known that his tactical indiscretion would not be unwelcome in Rome. The power of ultramontane publicity lay precisely in this combination of clarity over certain shared general objectives with a flexible, fuzzy structure in which boundaries of competence and responsibility were blurred. A crucial advantage of this arrangement was that it permitted phases of rapid rhetorical radicalisation, while leaving the pope free to disassociate himself, when this was convenient, from published statements, even when they appeared in *Civiltà Cattolica*.⁵⁴

Only in October 1870, after the seizure of Rome and the surrounding territory by the armed forces of the Kingdom of Italy, was a concerted effort made to steer and coordinate news coverage of the Roman question and of papal issues more generally in the European press. The consequence was the foundation in October 1870 of the *Correspondance de Genève*, a bulletin whose function was to supply the Catholic press internationally with a centrally coordinated news service covering Catholic affairs. It was published between two or three times a week in a French and German

⁵² M. Liberatore, *Il dogma dell'infallibilità pontificia. Dialogo fra un cattolico e un teologo Romano* (Naples, 1870), cited in Schatz, *Vaticanum I*, I, 203.

⁵³ A. B. Hasler, *Pius IX (1846–1878), päpstliche Unfehlbarkeit und I. Vatikanisches Konzil. Dogmatisierung und Durchsetzung einer Ideologie*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart, 1977), I, 18; see also Martina, *Pio IX (1867–1878)*, 154–5.

⁵⁴ Hasler, *Päpstliche Unfehlbarkeit*, I, 45; for an example of the same practice under Leo XIII, see R. Lill (ed.), *Vatikanische Akten zur Geschichte des deutschen Kulturkampfes. Leo XIII. Teil I (1878–1880)* (Tübingen, 1970), doc. 64, 130–1.

edition and was sent free of charge to some three hundred Catholic journals in Europe. Thanks to an informal – and secret – link with Mgr Wladimir Czacki, private secretary to Pius IX, the paper's editors in Geneva enjoyed access to accurate and privileged information. It depended upon the collaboration of a network of lay activists around the Dutch Catholic tycoon J. W. Cramer that included some of the most prominent and influential figures in the associational landscape of European Catholicism. While a number of these individuals became active within the editorial structure of the journal, others acted as 'permanent agents' whose task was to gather information and file reports covering state–church relations and Catholic affairs in their respective countries.⁵⁵

The *Correspondance* was initially a great success, in that its reports were widely reprinted in the European Catholic press.⁵⁶ Some historians have discerned in this venture the emergence of a 'Black International' capable of mobilising support for the papal cause through a centrally steered apparatus.⁵⁷ But the experiment was short-lived. It foundered above all on the deep ambivalence of the curia towards all forms of autonomous lay initiative. The secrecy of the Vatican link provided a certain flexibility for the curia, which remained free to distance itself from the journal when this was diplomatically convenient. However, it also spelled frustration for many of the lay agents of the network, who would have preferred to operate openly as papally authorised crusaders for a revitalised church.⁵⁸ The operation by elements in the Vatican of a covert lay network also generated resentment among those who were officially entrusted with the gathering and dissemination of information on the curia's behalf. In 1876, the Vatican link to the journal was severed under the new secretary of state, Cardinal Simeoni, on the grounds that it was the nuncios who ought to be entrusted with orienting the Catholic press on matters of importance to the papacy.

The real danger, from the curia's point of view, in extended collaboration with autonomous lay networks lay in the possibility that such groups might ultimately subordinate the requirements of the curia and the hierarchy to

⁵⁵ A comprehensive study has been made of the *Correspondance* by a team of historians coordinated by Professor Emiel Lamberts at the Katholiek Documentatie en Onderzoekscentrum (KADOC), an inter-faculty institute of the K.U. Leuven, Belgium. See esp. E. Lamberts, 'L'Internationale noire. Une organisation secrète au service du Saint-Siège', in Lamberts, (ed.), *Black International*, 15–101. I am grateful to Professor Lamberts for making a copy of this paper available to me before its publication.

⁵⁶ Jacques Lory, 'La "Correspondance de Genève", 1870–1873: un organe de presse singulier', in Lamberts, *Black International*, 103–31.

⁵⁷ Lamberts, 'L'Internationale noire'.

⁵⁸ Vincent Viaene, 'A Brilliant Failure: Wladimir Czacki, the Legacy of the Geneva Committee and the Origins of Vatican Press Policy from Pius IX to Leo XIII', in Lamberts, *Black International*, 231–55.

the pursuit of a different, alien agenda. The scale of the problem was made clear when the death of Pius IX was followed by the inauguration of a more conciliatory curial policy under his successor, Leo XIII. Although there were many strands of continuity, Leo's pontificate was marked by a readiness to seek a *modus vivendi* with the secular authorities, even where these were fundamentally anticlerical or anti-Catholic in outlook, and by a growing emphasis on 'social' themes, such as labour protection.

The ultramontane publicity networks that had prospered under the informal sponsorship of Pius IX now came in part to present an oppositional front against the new curial regime, and a hindrance to the new pope's efforts to bring about a change of course. There were demonstrative acts of veneration for the deceased pontiff, part of whose purpose was to imply damaging comparisons with his successor. In 1885, an innocuous letter from Cardinal Pitra, a favourite of Pius IX, was published in *Amstelbode*, an intransigent Belgian journal. Construed by the ultramontanes as an attack on Leo XIII, the article was quickly snapped up and reprinted in ultramontane papers across Europe, notably *El Siglo Futuro*, the *Journal de Rome* and the *Osservatore Cattolico*. A storm erupted over the unfortunate Pitra, whose letter had not been intended to give offence and who lost no time in assuring the Holy See of his filial devotion.⁵⁹

There were also direct protests against the new policy of accommodation pursued by the curia. The ultramontane Bavarian organ, *Das Bayerische Vaterland*, for example, which had served the curia well in the campaign against Old Catholics, now criticised the Holy See for entering into negotiations with Bismarck.⁶⁰ Bismarck may have assumed that the Catholic newspapers were operated by remote control from the Holy See, but the reality was different. Reporting on the state of affairs in the German states during the negotiations between the curia and Bismarck over ending the *Kulturkampf* in Germany, the Munich nuncio Cardinal Aloisi Masella expressed his concern that the Catholic press with its 'excess of zeal' and its 'democratic attitudes' would be more of a hindrance to a settlement than the liberal opposition.⁶¹ In Germany in particular, the existence of a powerful Catholic Party created potentially serious conflicts of interest. Even the most 'Roman' and clerical Catholics often found it difficult to reconcile their loyalty to the curia with the demands of local, regional or national

⁵⁹ Francesco Malgeri, *La stampa cattolica in Roma dal 1870 a 1915* (Brescia, 1965), 143–4; Giuseppe Grabinski, *Leone XIII e la stampa cattolica*, 2nd edn (Florence, 1885), 84–8.

⁶⁰ Lill, *Vatikanische Akten* 130, n. 1.

⁶¹ Masella to Cardinal Secretary of State Nina, Munich, 27 August 1878, in Lill (ed.), *Vatikanische Akten*, doc. 64, 130–1.

politics.⁶² Thus, while it was relatively easy by means of permissive signals to mobilise the German Catholic press for the culture war, reining it in was quite another matter. Similar problems arose in Spain, where the intransigent circles around the journal *Siglo Futuro* openly accused senior clerical figures, such as Cardinal Moreno, archbishop of Toledo, of being too servile in their relations with the constitutional monarchy, or vilified the activities of the conciliatory *Unión Católica*, whose work had been publicly praised by the new pope.⁶³

The problem underlying all these cases was that 'ultramontanism' had never been reducible simply to the idea of obedience to impulses from Rome. By the late 1860s, the ultramontane networks were increasingly dominated by figures from the legitimist, ultra-conservative right who felt little inclination to accommodate themselves to the new climate within the church and were hostile to the implicit labourism of 'social Catholicism'. Ultramontanism, in other words, represented specific social and political constellations whose interests – though they might generally overlap with – were not necessarily identical to those of the Holy See.

In an effort to counter-balance the disruptive influence of the extremist press, Leo XIII sponsored and established loyalist 'Leonine' journals, secretly subsidised from the Vatican, whose task was to respond robustly to all attacks from the ultramontane press.⁶⁴ In the early 1880s, Leo XIII encouraged the establishment in Rome of the French-language journal, *Le Moniteur de Rome*, whose editor, Joseph Denais, reacted vigorously to all attacks from the ultramontane papers. However one judges the success of these ventures, they demonstrate the irreversibility of the changes wrought by the pontificate of Pius IX.

A central concern under the new regime was to repair the damage that had been done by extremist journals under the previous pontificate to the public authority and prestige of the hierarchy.⁶⁵ After repeated attacks on moderate Spanish bishops by Candido Nocedal's *Siglo Futuro*, for example, Leo XIII responded in June 1883 with a forthright letter to Mgr Rampolla del Tindaro, the nuncio in Spain:

The press that arrogates to itself the title of Catholic and that makes a profession of fighting under the sacred banner of our holy religion must, by absolute necessity, profess with respect all the doctrines and all precepts, accepting fully the living

⁶² M. L. Anderson, *Practicing Democracy. Elections and Political Culture in Imperial Germany* (Princeton, 2000), 117–23.

⁶³ Grabinski, *Leone XIII*, 58–9.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 35; Malgeri, *Stampa cattolica*, 142–3.

⁶⁵ Maria Franca Mellano, *Cattolici e voto politico in Italia. Il 'non expedit' all'inizio del pontificato di Leone XIII* (Casale Monferrato, 1982), 81, 135.

authority of the Church... Consequently, if this press were to neglect these same fundamental duties, it is evident that it would no longer be entitled to bear the glorious title of Catholic, nor to deceive the faithful with a false appearance of orthodoxy.⁶⁶

During the mid-1880s, repeated warnings of this kind were issued to French, Italian and Spanish journals in encyclicals and letters to nuncios.

Papal press policy under Leo XIII thus manifested a curious reversal of polarities. Whereas the papalist press of the previous regime had distinguished between 'liberal Catholics' and Catholics 'properly speaking',⁶⁷ the Leonine papacy and its agents impugned the right of certain ultra-conservative groups to call themselves 'Catholic'. Whereas Pius IX, notwithstanding moments of ambivalence, had tended to support ultramontane journals against moderate bishops, Leo supported his bishops against the intransigent journals.

The oppositional energies of parts of the formerly ultramontane press after 1878 invite comparison with the 'Bismarck press' that raged against the German imperial government after the departure of the chancellor who had created it using trusted personal allies, covert subsidies and carefully targeted leaks. The comparison is less far-fetched than it sounds. Cardinal Wladimir Czacki, the Polish clergyman who ran Pius IX's secret liaison with the 'Black International' in Geneva during the 1870s, is reputed to have learned from observing Bismarck's skill in the management of public opinion.⁶⁸ Moreover, for all their differences, Bismarck and Pius IX had something in common. They were both 'men of 1848', whose conception of power and authority had been shaped in good part by the trauma of revolution. Both emerged from this experience with a confidence in the soundness of the masses of 'little folk' whose loyalties remained to be mobilised, both were acutely sensitive to the power of the press and public opinion, and both presided over significant innovations in publicity management. The paradoxical consequence in both cases was the creation of a press network

⁶⁶ Cited in Grabinski, *Leone XIII*, 59; see also Lannon, *Privilege*, esp. 125. For clerical criticism of the 'disobedience' of the integralist press in Spain, see Vicente Carcel Ortí, *León XIII y los católicos españoles. Informes vaticanos sobre la Iglesia en España* (Pamplona, 1988), esp. 878–9; F. Díaz de Cerio and M. F. Núñez y Muñoz, *Instrucciones secretas a los nuncios de España en el siglo XIX (1847–1907)* (Rome, 1989), 255–62; B. Urigüen, 'La prensa contrarrevolucionaria durante el reinado de Isabel II', in A. Gil Novales (ed.), *La prensa y la revolución liberal: España, Portugal y América Latina* (Madrid, 1983), 583–612; here 590.

⁶⁷ This distinction was drawn by *Civiltà Cattolica* in an article of 6 February 1869 attacking the opponents of infallibility; see Martina, *Pio IX (1867–1878)*, 154–5.

⁶⁸ Viaene, 'A Brilliant Failure'.

that was more attached to a specific charismatic individual than to the abstract formal authority that he represented.

The impact of the ultramontane press on literate European Catholics should not be underestimated. Wolfram Kaiser has pointed to the ways in which liberal and anticlerical publicity began to speak for a transnational, 'partially Europeanised' public sphere. The same can be said for the Catholic organs. Irish readers of *The Tablet* could follow in detail the debates over secularising measures in the Piedmontese parliament; the Italian readers of *Civiltà Cattolica* could follow the unfolding of Bismarck's struggle with the German Catholics; the Spanish Catholic press reprinted articles from *L'Univers*, *Civiltà Cattolica*, *L'Unità* and *The Tablet*; by the 1870s the latest news from Rome was standard fare in hundreds of Catholic newspapers across the continent.⁶⁹ Catholic journalism may have been second-rate by the belletristic criteria of the liberal press, but it helped to sustain the sense of simultaneity and urgency, the sense of a shared predicament, that moved tens of thousands of Catholics – including many from the poorest classes – to support the Holy See with money and gifts. Of course it would be going too far to suggest that these trends sufficed to displace the nation as an object of increasing emotional attachment in the minds of many European Catholics – Europe remained, despite the homogenising efforts of the ultramontanes, a continent of national 'Catholicisms', and the great struggles of the culture wars were fought within the framework of the nation-states and their distinct political cultures.⁷⁰ But the achievement of the Catholic press lay precisely in the capacity to link these discrete conflicts with each other, to draw out common themes, to build a sense of solidarity: not only with the pope, but also with beleaguered co-religionists across the continent. In this way, the Catholic papers helped to build that transnational community of sentiment that was so characteristic of European (and to a lesser extent, global) Catholicism in the last decades of the century.

⁶⁹ See, for example, from *The Tablet*: 'Piedmont', 20 January 1855, 37; 'From our Roman Correspondent', 22 October 1870, 524–5; 'Rome', 26 November 1870, 686; 'Paderborn', 11 December 1875, 756; 'Condizione dei Cattolici dopo le leggi fondamentali in Austria', *Civiltà Cattolica* 7 (1869), 641–56; 'La persecuzione della chiesa nella Svizzera', *Civiltà Cattolica* 12 (1873), 272–85, the regular feature 'Contemporanea' in *Civiltà Cattolica* routinely included the latest news on Catholic affairs in Switzerland, Germany, Austria, France, Italy and Spain; see also Urigüen, 'La prensa contrarrevolucionaria', 595. Historical research on the Catholic press in most parts of Europe has scarcely advanced beyond the cataloguing of titles and tendencies; further research is needed before more precise claims can be made about its impact on Catholic opinion.

⁷⁰ On the persistence of national commitments within (German) Catholicism, see B. Stambolis, 'Nationalisierung trotz Ultramontanisierung oder: "Alles für Deutschland. Deutschland aber für Christus". Mentalitätsleitende Wertorientierung deutscher Katholiken im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert', *Historische Zeitschrift* 269 (1999), 57–97.

RHETORIC AND REALITY

The culture wars were waged with a range of instruments: legislation, civil disobedience, demonstrations and on some occasions even physical violence. But they were, above all, wars of words and images. From the middle decades of the century, the conflict between anticlerical and Catholic/ultramontane forces was marked – and to a certain extent driven – by a process of rhetorical radicalisation. On both sides, the purpose of polemic was twofold: to define one's own cause and the values espoused in its support, and to define the 'enemy' in terms of the negation of those values. So extreme and all-pervasive was this process of rhetorical inflation that it came to constitute a kind of 'virtual reality', quite independent of the complex and nuanced relationships that actually existed between and within the Catholic and anticlerical milieux.

Papal utterances played a crucial role in the process of rhetorical escalation that culminated in the culture wars. The public statements of Gregory XVI and especially of Pius IX were marked by a stridency of tone that set them apart from their eighteenth-century predecessors (with the possible exception of *Unigenitus*). The language was at once sharper and less focused. The 'enemy' identified in many encyclicals was not a person or organisation, but a pervasive tendency. 'Wickedness is exultant', Gregory XVI declared in 1832. 'Shameless science exults. Licentiousness exults. Truth is corrupted. Errors of every kind are spread without constraint. Wicked men abuse holy laws and rights and institutions'.⁷¹ Pius IX's pontificate opened on a more conciliatory note, but with the papacy's defeat and expropriation at the hands of the Kingdom of Italy in 1859/61 and 1870 there was a drift into increasingly extreme rhetoric: the Italian government were 'wolves', 'liars', 'satellites of Satan in human flesh', 'monsters of hell' and so on.⁷² The confrontation with the Piedmontese/Italian kingdom was the bitterest of the struggles waged by the papacy during these decades and the heat generated by it communicated itself to many public utterances whose purpose was ostensibly to address different or much broader questions. The *Syllabus of Errors* (1864) contained, as we have noted, polemical formulations from an earlier document bemoaning anticlerical measures launched under the Piedmontese monarchy, and the accompanying encyclical, *Quanta cura*, offered a vision of contemporary society that was nothing short of apocalyptic:

⁷¹ Gregory XVI, *Minari vos*, 15 August 1832, cited in Chadwick, *Popes*, 23.

⁷² Chadwick, *Popes*, 235.

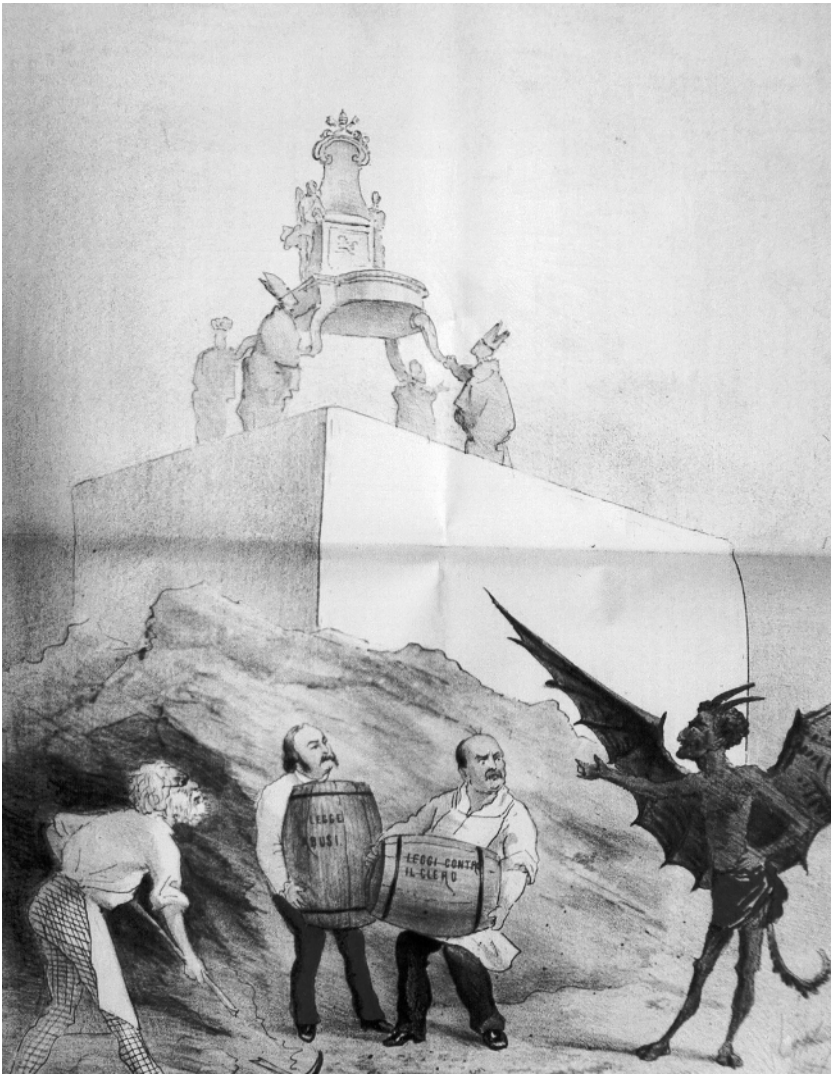


Figure 1 The devil and the anticlericals make common cause. In this heavy-handed allegory from the papalist journal *L'Iride*, two Italian anticlerical politicians, Agostino Depretis and Pasquale Mancini, are shown in company with the German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck carrying earth away from the foot of the papal throne in barrels marked 'laws against the clergy'. The devil addresses them with the words: 'Trying to undermine this rock? Alas, barons! I have been trying it for nineteen centuries and I have never succeeded!' (*L'Iride. Periodico Romano Umoristico-Satirico*, 2/8, 25 February 1877).



Figure 2 Italian anticlericals emulate their German hero. The Italian anticlerical politician

Pasquale Mancini, shown here bearing manacles and 'Laws against the abuses of the clergy', is depicted as the ape of Bismarck. The caption states: 'The master is a brute, but the monkey's not joking either!' Italian clerical journals often sought to discredit Italian anticlericals by suggesting that they were slavish imitators of the German *Kulturkämpfer*. (*L'Iride. Periodico Romano Uморistico-Satirico*, 1/7, 10 December 1876).

The criminal machinations of the evil ones . . . pour out their wickedness like waves from a storm-swept sea, and they promise liberty, while in reality these people above all are slaves of corruption, and with their false opinions and their lamentable writings they set about devouring the foundation of the Catholic religion and of civil society, expunging all virtue and justice, corrupting all minds and all hearts, so as to mislead the incautious and especially inexperienced youth, corrupt it, entwine it in errors, and finally tear it from the bosom of the Catholic Church.⁷³

It was characteristic of such papal rhetoric that its arguments were couched in abstractions and statements of principle; there was no effort at differentiation, no genuine engagement with an authentically historical

⁷³ This text was composed by the secretary of letters Luca Pacifici but fully approved by the pope; *Pii IX. Pontifici maximi acta* (Rome, 1857; repr. Graz, 1971), 687–700; quotation from 688.

sensibility.⁷⁴ Thus, an early issue of *Civiltà Cattolica* presented the journal as an instrument in the 'great battle' currently raging 'between truth and error'.⁷⁵ Since the world was perceived as divided into two opposing camps, the dissenters within Catholicism (liberal Catholics, Jansenists, Febronians, anti-infallibilists, etc.) were no less dangerous than its enemies without. 'The Holy Father said', one eye-witness reported in the early days of the Vatican Council of 1870, 'that the most pernicious enemies of the church are the liberal Catholics, because [these are] internal'.⁷⁶ In June 1871, Pius IX told a delegation of French Catholics that he feared the communards of Paris ('true demons from hell who walk upon the earth') less than 'this unhappy political tendency, this Catholic liberalism, which is our true scourge'.⁷⁷ These were extraordinary words indeed, coming as they did so soon after the news that the Commune had shot fifty-two hostages, including Mgr Darboy, the liberal archbishop of Paris.

The same tendency towards an increasingly binary worldview could be observed across the ultramontane press network. The Catholic polemic of the culture wars era projected a manichaean vision of a world in which the forces of Christ were arrayed against those of Satan. 'This is no time for half measures', one anonymous author declared in *De Katholiek*, an ultramontane journal published in 's-Hertogenbosch. 'Everyone is forced openly to take up a position with or against Christ – there is no middle way'.⁷⁸ It was a question, another article in the same journal suggested in 1874, of choosing between the 'Church of Christ' and the 'Synagogue of Satan'.⁷⁹ The same theme was manifest in the satirical images generated by a number of Catholic journals after the annexation of Rome. A cartoon published in *L'Iride*, a Roman journal of ultramontane inspiration, showed the devil and his minions celebrating recent sittings of the Italian parliament in which anticlerical laws had been passed. In another image from the same journal, the devil remonstrates with a trio of notorious anticlerical politicians who have set about trying to undermine the throne of St Peter: 'You want to undermine this rock? ... I've been trying to do that for nineteen centuries and I've never succeeded!'⁸⁰ In this manichaean worldview, the forces of

⁷⁴ Martina, *Pio IX (1851–1866)*, 125.

⁷⁵ Alvaro Dioscoridi, 'La rivoluzione italiana e "La Civiltà Cattolica"', *Rassegna Storica del Risorgimento* 42 (1955), 258–66.

⁷⁶ Franco, *Appunti*, 75–6.

⁷⁷ Allocution of 16 June 1871, cited in Y. Chiron, *Pie IX. Pape moderne* (Bitsche, 1995), 467.

⁷⁸ 'Rd.', 'Een enkel woord over Döllinger', *De Katholiek*, 60 (November 1871), 273–81, here 278.

⁷⁹ 'R.', 'Der vijand van de heilige Kerk', *De Katholiek* 66 (August 1871), 49–61. On this theme more generally, see Martina, *Pio IX (1867–1878)*, 433–9.

⁸⁰ 'Gran carnevale del 1877 nella città di Dite', *L'Iride*, 4 February 1877; 'La chiesa cattolica e i suoi persecutori', *L'Iride*, 25 February 1877.

'obedience' – one of the cardinal virtues celebrated by the papalist camp – were ranged against the forces of 'Satanic rebellion' unleashed by the revolutions of 1789 and 1848, and the Italian unification of 1859.⁸¹

The first casualties of this rhetorical polarisation were naturally the conciliatory Catholics, the '*transigenti*' who sought to defend a range of positions between the ultramontane and the anticlerical camps. The denigration of Catholic liberalism had long been a central theme of the ultramontane press, but it became more strident after the revolutions of 1848 and more strident again after the formation of the Kingdom of Italy and the annexation of Rome. A recurring strategy was to define liberal Catholic positions in a way that made them appear self-contradictory. The very concept of the 'liberal Catholic', *Civiltà* declared in 1869, was 'not only a bizarre and monstrous, but also an entirely repugnant combination', since liberalism implied the exclusion of any religious influence from social relationships. Not only, the article argued, was an accord between liberalism and Catholicism impossible, war between the two was inevitable.⁸² In a commentary on the current 'state of the Catholic liberals', a writer for *De Katholiek* declared that liberalism was 'the logical development of Protestantism' and that liberal Catholicism as a consequence was the 'bastard child' of two irreconcilable parents.⁸³ In a disturbing echo of earlier Spanish preoccupations with 'purity of blood', Cándido Necedal, editor of the integralist journal *Siglo Futuro*, denounced liberal Catholics as '*mestizos*' (half-breeds). The same line was taken up by many Spanish provincial papers.⁸⁴ Veuillot's *Illusion libérale*, composed in the perfervid style for which his journal was famous, was dedicated entirely to proving the impossibility of any accommodation between Catholics and liberals, as was Sardà i Salvany's *Liberalism is Sin*, which expounded the thesis that liberalism was a worse evil than blasphemy, adultery or homicide.⁸⁵ A cartoon in the Roman satirical paper *La Lima* depicted a liberal Catholic publicist begging Satan for inspiration and writing leader articles under his whispered dictation.⁸⁶ Special vituperation was reserved for those 'Old Catholics' who publicly doubted the wisdom of declaring infallibility in 1870 or rejected the doctrine in principle;

⁸¹ See, e.g., anon, 'Waartoe zijn de Katholieken in den tegenwoordigen Strijd verplicht?', *De Katholiek* 56 (July 1869), 1–21; also 'La Civiltà Cattolica nel 1860', *Civiltà Cattolica* 10 (1859), 641–56.

⁸² 'Ripugnanza del concetto di cattolico liberale', *Civiltà Cattolica* 8 (1869), 5–19; here 5; on this theme, see also Dioscoridi, 'Rivoluzione italiana', 261.

⁸³ C. L. van Rijn, 'De Toestand der katholieke liberalen in 1872', *De Katholiek* 62 (July–December 1872), 221–37, here 222, 223.

⁸⁴ M. Cruz Seoane, *Historia del periodismo en España*, 3 vols. (Madrid, 1983), vol. II: *El siglo XIX*, 175.

⁸⁵ L. Veuillot, *L'illusion libérale*, 2nd edn, (Paris, 1866); Sardà i Salvany, *El liberalismo es pecado* (Barcelona, 1884).

⁸⁶ 'La redazione del giornale d'esperance', *La Lima*, 21, 14 (15 Feb. 1871).

they were 'chorus-leaders in the camp that Satan commands against the eternal, infallible church'.⁸⁷ Only by reference to this extreme rhetorical climate can we explain the extraordinary receptiveness of the Catholic press throughout Europe to the spurious 'revelations' of the hoaxer 'Leo Taxil', who claimed to have witnessed Satan-worship, sorcery and diabolical apparitions while serving as a freemason.

A further corollary of the binary worldview that characterised much Catholic publicity in the era of the culture wars was the proliferation of conspiracy theories, in which the Jews frequently featured. Pius IX bestowed his blessing upon Roger Gougenot des Mousseaux, whose book, *Le juif, le judaïsme et la judaïsation des peuples Chrétiens*, published in Paris in 1869, depicted the Cabbala as a satanic cult and argued that the freemasons and the Jews were working together to overturn Christianity. Similar scenarios circulated in the published works of the parish priest and honorary canon Abbé Chabauty; Léon Meurin, the Jesuit archbishop of Port Louis in Mauritius; Mgr Anselme Tilloy; and Abbé Isidore Bertrand, whose brochure of 1903 described freemasonry as a 'Jewish sect'.⁸⁸ To be sure, Leo XIII's furious attack on free-masonry in the encyclical *Humanum genus* (20 April 1884) was free of any directly antisemitic content, but it lent support in principle to the scenarios of the antisemites, since it spoke of a world divided into followers of Christ and followers of Satan and observed that 'all those who follow this latter flag seem to be linked in one conspiracy'.⁸⁹ The church could thus reject antisemitism with one hand (on the grounds that its racist doctrine was incompatible with the infinity of divine grace) while broadly endorsing it with the other (on the grounds that Christianity needed defending against its most principled enemies).⁹⁰

As often in polemical confrontations, both sides fought to associate themselves with the same prestigious topoi: 'light', 'truth', 'liberty', 'civilisation' and even 'reason' featured prominently on both sides. One man's 'liberty'

⁸⁷ 'Rd.', 'Een enkel woord over Döllinger', 273–81, here 278.

⁸⁸ Abbé Chabauty, *Les francs-maçons et les juifs. Sixième âge de l'Eglise d'après l'Apocalypse* (Paris, 1881); Léon Meurin, *La franc-maçonnerie, synagogue de Satan* (Paris, 1893); Mgr Anselme Tilloy, *le péril judéo-maçonique, le mal – le remède* (Paris, 1897); Abbé Isidore Bertrand, *La franc-maçonnerie, secte juive* (Paris, 1903). All these works are discussed in J. Rogalla von Bieberstein, *Die These von der Verschwörung 1776–1945. Philosophen, Freimaurer, Juden, Liberale und Sozialisten als Verschwörer gegen die Sozialordnung* (Frankfurt am Main, 1976), 193–6.

⁸⁹ *Leonis pontificis maximi acta* (repr. Graz, 1971), IV, 43–70.

⁹⁰ On these contradictions in the logic of Catholic antisemitism, see Olaf Blaschke, *Katholizismus und Antisemitismus im deutschen Kaiserreich*, 2nd edn (Göttingen, 1999), passim; on the role of antisemitism as a stabilising element in the 'ideological structure' of nineteenth-century Catholicism, see Olaf Blaschke, 'Die Anatomie des katholischen Antisemitismus im 19. Jahrhundert. Eine Einladung zum internationalen Vergleich', in O. Blaschke and A. Mattioli (eds.), *Katholischer Antisemitismus im 19. Jahrhundert. Ursachen und Traditionen im internationalen Vergleich* (Zurich, 2000), 3–54.

was another's 'libertinism'.⁹¹ One characteristic article in *Unità Cattolica* (Turin) in 1876 contrasted 'the free sons of Pius IX' with 'the slaves of the revolution' (i.e. liberals) and asserted that 'the servitude of the *Syllabus* is the greater liberty, because it is undertaken from conviction and love'.⁹² Catholic polemic often depicted the opposing camp as a distorted mirror of the church and its following, in keeping with a traditional view of Satan, as the rebellious 'ape of God'. Thus the freemasons worshipped in a 'synagogue of Satan' whose rites and hierarchy were conceived in grotesque mimicry of the church of Christ. Their 'perverse society', spawned in 'shadow and obscurity' to the 'ruin of both religion and human society' was juxtaposed with those 'pious societies of the faithful that flourish within the Catholic Church'.⁹³ The avowed aim of *Scuola Cattolica*, founded in Milan in 1873, was to 'declare and expound the doctrine of that school of Catholicism which is the open condemnation of all the schools of lies and corruption that are today held in such honour'.⁹⁴

The same logic was at work in the notion that the culture war was a struggle to the finish between 'the two Frances' or 'the two Spains' or between 'the true Italy' and a 'subversive' or 'false' (*faziosa*, *fittizia*) Italy, which was little more than a travesty of the former.⁹⁵ 'For us in these days', one clerical journal announced, 'it is a great advantage to have a clear and neat division between the component elements of Italy... There is no middle path – we are either for or against the pope'.⁹⁶ To the 'two Italies' there corresponded 'two Romes': one the capital of world Christendom, the other the capital of a venal and inward-turned Italian kingdom. Thus the papalist journal *Rome ou la Patrie Catholique*, founded in October 1870 shortly after the annexation, informed its readers that its purpose was to 'work towards reinforcing the links that connect Rome with the entire world'.⁹⁷ Other journals (*La Frusta*, *La Voce della Verità*, *La Lima*) polemicised against the

⁹¹ See, for example, 'La Civiltà Cattolica nel 1860', *Civiltà Cattolica* 10 (1859), 641–56; here 651.

⁹² Cited in Mellano, *Cattolici e voto politico*, 39, n. 9, 10.

⁹³ Allocution *Multiplies inter machinationes*, September 1865, cited in Chiron, *Pie IX*, 360–1; on 'distorting mirroring' in Catholic rhetoric, see G. Cubitt, 'Catholics versus Freemasons in Nineteenth-Century France', in F. Tallet and N. Atkin (eds.), *Religion, Society and Politics in France since 1789* (London, 1991), 121–36, esp. 132.

⁹⁴ Cited in Majo, *Stampa cattolica*, 56.

⁹⁵ Dioscoridi, 'Rivoluzione italiana', 266; Claude Langlois, 'Catholics and Seculars', in P. Nora (ed.), *Realms of Memory, Rethinking the French Past*, trans. A. Goldhammer, 3 vols. (New York, 1996), vol. I: *Conflicts and Divisions*, 109–43, here 111.

⁹⁶ *L'Armonia* (Turin), cited in John N. Molony, *The Emergence of Political Catholicism in Italy. Partito Popolare 1919–1926* (London, 1976), 19.

⁹⁷ *Rome ou la Patrie Catholique*, 23 October 1872, cited in Malgeri, *La stampa cattolica*, 25.

Piedmontese ‘*buzzurri*’ – Roman slang for immigrants – who now thronged to the city from the north to take up positions in government service.⁹⁸

To what extent did these images of extreme polarisation correspond with the lived reality of European societies? Recent research on the associational networks of Catholic Europe has shown how successful the church and its lay auxiliaries were, not only in organising the faithful around confessionally oriented activities, but also in confessionalising the contexts in which various non-religious activities – such as sport, reading, labour representation, or even banking and everyday consumption – were conducted. In Italy, for example, the Catholic ‘movement’ boasted 4,000 parish groups and 7,000 workers’ societies by the late 1890s; by 1908, about an eighth of Italy’s organised workforce was enrolled in ‘white’ or Catholic unions supported by a network of small banks.⁹⁹ Historians of German and Swiss-German Catholicism in particular have written of a Catholic ‘ghetto’, or of a ‘Catholic milieu’ characterised by close internal bonds and relatively impermeable boundaries.¹⁰⁰ In the context of the Low Countries, historians have highlighted the process of ‘pillarisation’ (*verzuiling*) by which Catholics and liberals came to constitute parallel but distinct societies within the broader ‘national’ community.¹⁰¹ In Germany, and to a lesser extent in Italy and France, where the culture wars coincided with the formation and consolidation of new polities, the legacy of the culture wars was a lasting polarisation of political allegiances along confessional or clerical/anticlerical lines.¹⁰² In France, Spain and Italy, moreover, levels of religious observance and the capacity of Catholic groups to mobilise the faithful around confessional objectives varied enormously from one region to another, to the

⁹⁸ Malgeri, *La stampa cattolica*, 28, 47–8, 59. ⁹⁹ Molony, *Political Catholicism*, 25, 34.

¹⁰⁰ U. Altermatt, *Katholizismus und Moderne. Zur Sozial- und Mentalitätsgeschichte der schweizer Katholiken im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Zurich, 1989), esp. 66–8; Altermatt, *Der Weg der schweizer Katholiken*, esp. 37, 52, 58; Peter Lösche and Franz Walter, ‘Katholiken, Konservative und Liberale. Milieus und Lebenswelten bürgerlicher Parteien in Deutschland während des 20. Jahrhunderts’, *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* 51 (2000), 471–92; for an overview of the relevant German literature, see Heilbronner, ‘From Ghetto to Ghetto’.

¹⁰¹ On Catholic *verzuiling*, see Hans Righaut, *De katholieke Zuil in Europa. Het ontstaan van verzuiling onder Katholiken in Oostenrijk, Zwitserland, België en Nederland* (Amsterdam, 1986); John A. Coleman, *The Evolution of Dutch Catholicism* (Los Angeles, 1978), esp. 58–87; J. M. G. Thurlings, *De wankende Zuil: Nederlandse Katholiken tussen assimilatie en pluralisme* (Deventer, 1978); Frans Groot, *Roomse, rechtzinnigen en nieuwlichters: Verzuiling in een Hollandse Plattelandsgemeente. Naaldwijk 1850–1930* (Hilversum, 1992).

¹⁰² On Germany, see esp. Jonathan Sperber, *The Kaiser’s Voters. Electors and Elections in Imperial Germany* (Cambridge, 1997), esp. 265–82; on Italy, G. Candeloro, *Il movimento cattolico in Italia* (Rome, 1953), esp. 142, Mellano, *Cattolici e voto politico*, 132–3; on France, Ralph Gibson, *A Social History of French Catholicism, 1789–1914* (London, 1989).

extent that the bifurcation of society into believers and unbelievers seemed anchored in the cultural geography of the nation.¹⁰³

We should not press this argument too far, of course. The polemical rhetoric, with its harsh oppositions, sometimes belied a reality of collaboration and pragmatic accommodation. The struggle waged by the papacy against the Italian state was fought over real issues and genuine abuses, but the tacit acceptance on both sides of the 'Laws of Guarantee' as the 'constitutional' basis of the Vatican's status within the new Italian nation-state was an important act of compromise. In the 1880s, one historian has argued, a 'tacit alliance' developed between the church authorities and the French state, based on habits of inconspicuous collaboration.¹⁰⁴ Catholics and secular nationalists worked in tandem to sustain the *Italianità* of the Italian diaspora, even while the culture war was at its height.¹⁰⁵ Throughout the 1870s, many Austrian Catholics continued to support those parliamentary liberals who defended the centralised Habsburg system against the federalist demands of the ethnic nationalists. In Germany, Catholic reading clubs nurtured a progressive and even mildly nationalist ethos among German Catholics without arousing the ire of the hierarchy.¹⁰⁶ Some historians have argued, moreover, that the term 'milieu' overstates the homogeneity and cohesion of Catholic society in the German Empire after 1871.¹⁰⁷

CONCLUSION: MODERNITY AND THE CULTURE WARS

An influential view would have it that the marshalling of Catholic energies characteristic of the era of the culture wars was an essentially regressive phenomenon, in the sense that it retarded the emergence of modern political cultures by pledging committed Catholics to a struggle against 'modern civilisation' and concentrating them in a sociologically, ideologically and culturally backward 'ghetto'. But this view sits uneasily with the transformations we have examined in this chapter. Like many European states,

¹⁰³ On regional contrasts in Spain, see Lannon, *Privilege*, esp. 4–19; on France, Gérard Cholvy and Yves-Marie Hilaire, *Histoire religieuse de la France contemporaine*, 3 vols. (Toulouse, 1985–8), I, 259–312.

¹⁰⁴ Livio Rota, *Le nomine vescovili e cardinalizie in Francia alla fine del secolo XIX* (Rome, 1996), esp. 357.

¹⁰⁵ R. J. B. Bosworth, *Italy and the Wider World, 1860–1960* (London, 1996), 121.

¹⁰⁶ Jeffrey T. Zalar, '“Knowledge is Power”. The *Borromäusverein* and Catholic Reading Habits in Imperial Germany', *Catholic Historical Review* 86 (2000), 20–46; see also Stambolis, 'Nationalisierung trotz Ultramontanisierung'.

¹⁰⁷ See, e.g., Wilfried Loth, 'Soziale Bewegungen im Katholizismus des Kaiserreichs', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 17 (1991), 279–310; also H. W. Smith and C. M. Clark, 'The Fate of Nathan', in H. W. Smith (ed.), *Protestants, Catholics and Jews in Germany 1800–1914* (Oxford and New York, 2001), 3–29.

the church entered a phase of centralisation whose foremost victims were the traditional holders of provincial authority. The *means* adopted by the nineteenth-century Catholics – mass-circulation media, voluntary associations, demonstrative forms of mass action, the expansion of schooling among deprived social groups¹⁰⁸ and the increasingly prominent involvement of women in positions of responsibility¹⁰⁹ – were quintessentially modern.

Moreover, it is far from clear that Catholic mobilisation hindered or delayed processes of political modernisation in the European states. In a number of European countries, confessional conflict contributed to the broadening of political participation by providing Catholics (especially rural ones) with the language and argument of collective interest and thus with a reason for entering the political arena as activists, deputies or voters.¹¹⁰ Catholic mobilisation may even, in the longer term, have had a secularising impact on European politics. For the mass-membership parties that emerged in Belgium, the Netherlands, Austria, Germany and Italy – against the better judgement of the hierarchy – to defend the interests of European Catholics against liberal, Protestant or anticlerical elites soon emancipated themselves from clerical control. They gradually distanced themselves from the church, defining their identity and that of their constituency in terms that de-emphasised religion. Paradoxically, as one historian of the Catholic parties has observed, the organisations formed to bring religion into politics actually ended by taking it out. In these ways, liberal democracy in Europe was ‘expanded and consolidated by its enemies’.¹¹¹

It could still be objected that although the *means* deployed in creating the new Catholicism were ‘modern’, the *ends* by which it defined itself were emphatically not. This observation would seem to be supported by the denunciations of ‘modern civilisation’ that figured so prominently in later nineteenth-century Catholic rhetoric. To be sure, these outbursts have

¹⁰⁸ On Catholicism and schooling in Spain, see Payne, *Spanish Catholicism*, 100.

¹⁰⁹ On the role of women in Catholic associational culture, see, e.g., Ralph Gibson, ‘Why Republicans and Catholics Couldn’t Stand Each Other in the Nineteenth Century’, J. F. McMillan, ‘Religion and Gender in Modern France: Some Reflections’, and Hazel Mills, ‘Negotiating the Divide: Women, Philanthropy and the “Public Sphere” in Nineteenth-Century France’, all in Tallett and Atkin (eds.), *Religion*, 107–20, 29–54, 55–66; Caroline Ford, ‘Religion and Popular Culture in Modern Europe’, *Journal of Modern History* 65 (1993), 152–75; Clear, *Nuns*; Langlois, *Catholicisme*. For an account that denies the ‘emancipatory’ potential in Catholic female voluntarism, arguing that it merely consolidated patriarchal power relations, see Götz von Olenhusen, *Klerus*, 19–20, 397–8.

¹¹⁰ These themes are explored in M. L. Anderson, *Practicing Democracy*, 69–151, and broadly supported by the statistical analyses presented in Sperber, *The Kaiser’s Voters*. A persuasive but more narrowly focused case for the constructive character of Catholic protest is made specifically for Italy in Gabriele de Rosa, *Il contributo dei cattolici alla formazione del nuovo stato* (Rome, 1963), esp. 13–14.

¹¹¹ S. N. Kalyvas, *The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe* (Ithaca, N. Y., 1996), 262.

to be read in context. The term 'modern' as used by nineteenth-century liberals was not value-neutral; the furious rejection by Catholics of 'modern civilisation' was an attack on a specifically liberal conception of what it meant to be 'modern' and 'civilised', not a blanket condemnation of all that was changing in contemporary life. But the fact remains that the Catholic church and its lay auxiliaries were hostile to some of the principles that appear to have been central to the advent of modernity: the idea, for example, that societies ought to be composed of autonomous individuals with unbound consciences, or the idea that economic deregulation and the 'liberation' of entrepreneurial energies in an environment of more or less free competition are intrinsically virtuous.

We need nonetheless to move beyond a binary conception of the culture wars as a confrontation between 'modern' and 'anti-modern' forces. For even a very cursory look at all the parties reveals that all were selective and ideological in their celebration of 'the modern'. Liberals rejoiced in science, commerce and industry and a political order centred on the putatively autonomous (male, educated, tax-paying) subject but were deeply sceptical (with good reason, as it turned out) of the benefits of democratisation. In the middle decades of the nineteenth century, Liberals could argue with some justice that they were the party of forward 'movement', but this claim rang rather hollow by the 1890s when they found themselves outflanked by new mass parties. Their elitist politics and their dependence upon informal networks of property-owning worthies now looked decidedly obsolete. As for the socialist left, whose successes in many parts of Europe helped to weaken the political purchase of liberalism, they too prided themselves on a worldview that was objective, scientific, progressive and emancipatory, but they were naturally critical of modern capitalism and the profit motive that lies at its root – there was some common ground here with social Catholic critiques of 'Mammonistic capital' and calls for the defence of labour. Profound ambivalences underlay even the most trenchantly modernist enterprises. The great ideologies of the nineteenth century – the New Catholicism included – were not animated by an unequivocal celebration of all that was 'modern', but by a desire to master and contain the challenges posed by rapid change, to seize the opportunities while averting the dangers.

'Clericalism – that is our enemy!': European anticlericalism and the culture wars

Wolfram Kaiser

Spaniards always stand behind their priests – either with candles in hand to light a procession, or with sticks to beat them up.¹ As this old joke suggests, both Catholic popular piety and militant anticlericalism took on forms in the Iberian peninsula that were extreme by European standards. But the joke also reminds us that the culture wars waged across Europe against clerical influence and ultramontanistism were not confined to liberal elites and were not fought solely with parliamentary speeches, secularising legislation and state repression of church autonomy.

German and Italian liberals used anticlerical rhetoric and parliamentary initiatives to expedite national integration at the expense of the Catholic church; moderate French republicans sought in the tradition of Voltaire to purge the secular state of all political activity by priests and church institutions. But political activism of this kind constituted only one level of the European culture wars.² Anticlericalism was also a mass phenomenon with deep social roots. In the extra-parliamentary sphere, its primary agents included religious groups and institutions. The most important of these were liberal Catholicism, nonconformist liberal Protestantism in the predominantly Protestant states of central and northern Europe, and the various religious minorities who anticipated that a political victory over ultramontanist or orthodox Protestant clericalism would bring about their complete legal and social emancipation. Equally important, however, were those emphatically anticlerical organisations, such as the freemasons and the free-thinkers of France, Belgium and Italy who cultivated close ideological and personal links with the progressive parties. Even within the party-political spectrum, the initially dominant role of bourgeois liberal interests in setting the anticlerical agenda was soon eclipsed by radical democrats, socialists

¹ Julio de la Cueva, 'The Stick and the Candle: Clericals and Anticlericals in Northern Spain, 1898–1913', *European History Quarterly* 26/2 (1996), 241–65, 243.

² On the two levels of anticlericalism, see, for example, Jacques Gadille, 'On French Anticlericalism: Some Reflections', *European Studies Review* 13/2 (1983), 127–44, 129.

and anarchists who sought to radicalise the struggle against the Catholic church. In other words, anticlericalism was at once a deeper-rooted and a politically more heterogeneous movement than can be discerned from an analysis focused exclusively on parliamentary debates and liberal governmental measures.

Secularising laws – the introduction of civil marriage, for example, or of mandatory state schooling – were framed in a sharply anticlerical liberal rhetoric. This has often been interpreted as the tactically motivated strategy of an elitist bourgeoisie that sought to instrumentalise anticlerical sentiments in order to deflect attention from the social conflicts in European society in an age of industrialisation.³ According to this view, the liberal struggle against the Catholics and the pope was, to borrow Marx's formulation 'opium for the people', because its purpose was to capture and neutralise legitimate demands for a further democratisation of politics and for far-reaching social reform. Historians working from a materialist standpoint have thus exhibited just as little empathy for the motivations driving European anticlericalism as Catholic historians have. From their perspective, the culture wars appear to be little more than a painstakingly manipulated proxy battlefield in the history of European social conflict.

It is certainly true that some socialists feared lest the extreme 'clerophobia' of the liberals should conceal the fact that in the capitalist economic order 'the true enemy of the worker is not clericalism . . . but rather the employer'.⁴ More recent studies have shown, moreover, that anticlericalism made it easier for many liberals and republicans in Europe to marginalise social conflict and to cement their otherwise very heterogeneous political alliances.⁵ There are good reasons, nevertheless, for taking anticlericalism seriously, as an authentic system of beliefs. When Léon Gambetta emphatically declared on 4 May 1877 in the French Chamber of Deputies: 'Clericalism – that is our enemy!', he may not have been expressing 'the deepest feelings of the French people', as he claimed in the immodest manner beloved of French republicans, but he was certainly echoing the sentiments of many French citizens.⁶ Anticlericalism was as emotionally charged as ultramontanist, precisely because it was concerned with 'ultimate questions': with the aspiration for political, economic and social progress and with national integration – issues,

³ Cf. René Rémond, *L'anti-cléricalisme en France de 1815 à nos jours* (Paris, 1976), 5.

⁴ *La Voz del Pueblo*, 6 July 1902.

⁵ See, e.g., de la Cueva, 'The Stick and the Candle', 260; Pieter M. Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries, Liberal Politics, Social Experience, and National Identity in the Austrian Empire, 1848–1914* (Ann Arbor, 1996), IX.

⁶ Cited in Gadille, 'On French Anticlericalism', 127.

in other words, that would admit of no 'rotten' compromise.⁷ The 'war fever'⁸ that suffused liberal-anticlerical discourses in the era of European culture war arose both from a deep conviction that one was fighting in the name of progress and from a latent fear that the 'enemy' would prove more successful in recruiting volunteers.

Nevertheless, the culture war was not merely a political civil war of the 'two Frances'⁹ or of the 'two Spains'. For, in the eyes of most combatants, this was a European and thus, by the understanding of that time, a global conflict with a prominent transnational dimension. When a movement of rural-clerical 'patriots' won the Bavarian elections of November 1869 and forced Minister-President Chlodwig zu Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst out of office through a vote of no confidence, Hohenlohe commented, with an eye on the Vatican Council then underway that his own political destiny was of no consequence; the conflict in Bavaria was 'only a part of that great contest which at this moment is convulsing the entire world'.¹⁰ In this sense, then, the culture war appeared to be a conflict of world-historical significance in which, as the long-serving British prime minister William Gladstone put it, Europeans fought to defend both their 'civic individuality' and their moral right 'to claim superiority in world affairs'. Should ultramontanism emerge victorious, Gladstone warned, the 'European type' would become 'politically debased to the Mahometan and Oriental model'.¹¹

The European dimension of anticlericalism has hitherto received scant attention from historians. It has tended to be mentioned only in passing comments of a comparative nature, to the effect, for example, that Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* should be seen as 'a small sub-section of a much broader complex of events'.¹² The intrinsic practical difficulties of research on transnational themes doubtless partly account for this deficit, but a more important reason is the fact that the historiography of the culture wars has for too long been founded on the false assumption that the period up to the outbreak of the First World War was an era of national integration and of national conflicts. This is of course one way of characterising the epoch, but it is not the only one. For this was also an era of dramatic expansion

⁷ Thomas Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1866–1918*, vol. II: *Machtstaat vor der Demokratie* (Munich, 1992), 366.

⁸ Michael B. Gross, 'Kulturkampf and Unification: German Liberalism and the War Against the Jesuits', *Central European History* 30/4 (1997), 545–66, 548.

⁹ Claude Langlois, 'Catholics and Seculars', in Pierre Nora (ed.), *Realms of Memory. Rethinking the French Past* (New York, 1996), I, 109–43, 111.

¹⁰ Cited from the English translation in the *Manchester Guardian*, 17 February 1870.

¹¹ Cited in H. C. G. Matthew, *Gladstone 1809–1898* (Oxford, 1997), 184.

¹² Winfried Becker, 'Der Kulturkampf als europäisches und als deutsches Phänomen', *Historisches Jahrbuch* 101 (1981), 422–46, 423.

in transport infrastructure, new means of communication and the mass dissemination of information – above all through newspapers. It saw the evolution of an at least partially Europeanised public sphere characterised by increasingly dense networks of transnational contacts that penetrated local, regional and national spaces. The translation of key materialist and positivist texts – mainly from French and German – provided European anticlericalism with a more or less consistent intellectual foundation. Personal cross-border contacts and systematically organised networks of anticlerical elites facilitated the assessment and adaptation of ‘foreign’ models and even, in some cases, provided the basis for concerted political action. Finally, there were those waves of spontaneous local anticlerical protests that were triggered by especially controversial political events such as the Mortara affair (1858), the Vatican Council (1869/70) and the Taxil scandal (1885/97). The resonance of these events within a transnational public sphere helped to constitute the ‘two Europes’ of the culture war era.

ANTICLERICAL PROTAGONISTS IN THE EUROPEAN CULTURE WARS

A cursory comparative glance at the regions of mixed Catholic and Protestant confessional allegiance in central Europe might lead one to conclude that the culture wars were little more than a confessional conflict overlaid by ideology. As Christopher Clark shows, however, the culture war began within Catholicism itself. The statist tradition embodied in French Gallicanism was not the only force to oppose the rise of ultramontanism within the church. The Gallicans were joined by liberal Catholics, who sought the realisation, in Montalembert’s formulation, of a ‘free church’ in a ‘free state’.¹³ They generally strove, like the liberal Catholics of Hungary, for a moderately secular resolution of the church–state problem.¹⁴ The liberals sought to overcome the hierarchical features of the old state churches, but they had no wish to replace these with Vatican domination. Their aim was to achieve a more ‘authentic’ church with a greater degree of lay participation through the installation of devolved democratic structures.

At the time of the Vatican Council, therefore, liberal Catholics like the Munich professor of theology Ignaz Döllinger, waged a bitter ‘pamphlet war’¹⁵ against the ultramontane exponents of papal infallibility, whom

¹³ Cited in Louis Girard, *Les libéraux français 1814–1875* (Paris, 1985), 220.

¹⁴ Cf. László Péter, ‘Hungarian Liberals and Church–State Relations (1867–1900)’, in György Ránki (ed.), *Hungarian and European Civilization* (Budapest, 1989), 79–138, 79.

¹⁵ Robert Aubert, *Vaticanum I* (Mainz, 1965; French edn 1964), 198–201. On the internal Catholic conflict that preceded the Vatican Council, see also Klaus Schatz, 2 vols. *Vaticanum I*, vol. I (Paderborn, 1992).

Montalembert described, shortly before his death in 1870, as operating under the 'remote control' of the Jesuits.¹⁶ Liberal Catholics also fought their internecine culture war with public protests and declarations. In February 1870, for example, some 150 citizens of Cologne signed a vote of thanks to Döllinger and thus expressed, in the words of the liberal *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung*, 'what the overwhelming majority of educated religious Catholics feel about the new Roman undertaking'.¹⁷

The Cologne initiative stemmed from 'men of academic education',¹⁸ especially administrative officials and teachers. Yet the characterisation cited above from a liberal daily newspaper, though doubtless intended as a compliment, also illuminates a crucial political weakness of liberal Catholicism. In an increasingly industrialised central Europe, it was above all a phenomenon of the educated urban bourgeoisie. In many rural regions, the marginalisation of liberals within the Catholic church had long been underway. Thus Josef Anton Bucher of the Swiss rural community of Obwalden observed to the Seeland Protestant Rudolf Schneider in December 1847 that although the Jesuits had 'all too many disciples here', he still had his 'hidden library', with books by Voltaire and Rousseau.¹⁹ With the process of radicalisation and polarisation that culminated in the Vatican Council of 1870, liberal Catholics came under increasing pressure within the church.²⁰ Indeed the leading republican newspaper *Le Siècle* declared in 1870 that liberal Catholicism was now self-evidently 'une anomalie'.²¹ After 1870, the isolation of German, Austrian and Swiss Old Catholics,²² and Catholic liberals in southern Europe, was deepened by state campaigns against the church that made it much easier for the hierarchy to marshal the loyalties of Catholics, even those who had opposed the Vatican policy of Pius IX. As a religious organisation, the liberal Catholics thus came to be little more than an 'educated bourgeois sect' caught up in an 'inexorable process of contraction'.²³ Their efforts to challenge the powerful, confessionally affiliated Centre Party though inter-confessional

¹⁶ Girard, *Les libéraux français*, 222.

¹⁷ [*Augsburger*] *Allgemeine Zeitung*, 18 February 1870. ¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Cited in Josef Lang, 'Der Unterwaldner Konflikt zwischen dem "neuen Bruder Klaus im Bundesfrack" und dem ultramontanen Klerus', in Alexandra Binnenkade and Aram Mattioli (eds.), *Die Innerschweiz im frühen Bundesstaat (1848–1874). Gesellschaftsgeschichtliche Annäherungen* (Zurich, 1999), 77–108, 79.

²⁰ On Spain cf. Antonio Moliner Prada, 'Anticlericalismo y revolución liberal (1833–1874)', in Emilio La Parra López and Manuel Suárez Cortina (eds.), *El anticlericalismo español contemporáneo* (Madrid, 1998), 69–125, 111; on Switzerland, see Heidi Borner, *Zwischen Sonderbund und Kulturkampf. Zur Lage der Besiegten im Bundesstaat von 1848* (Lucerne and Stuttgart, 1981), 190.

²¹ *Le Siècle*, 10 March 1870.

²² Cf. Victor Conzemius, *Katholiken ohne Rom: die altkatholische Kirchengemeinschaft* (Zurich, 1969).

²³ Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte*, Band III: *Von der 'Deutschen Doppelrevolution' bis zum Beginn des Ersten Weltkriegs* (Munich, 1995), 390.

organisations like the Deutscher Verein für die Rheinprovinz²⁴ founded in 1874 and the Liberale Reichspartei²⁵ founded by Hohenlohe in 1871 were only very moderately successful.

In the European states of mixed confession, liberal Catholicism remained capable of inter-confessional coalitions, because it developed in parallel to an analogous struggle within Protestantism. For there were also internal culture wars within Lutheranism in Germany, within Calvinism in the Netherlands and in England between the nonconformist Protestant denominations and Anglicanism. Liberal Lutherans, for example, organised themselves in the Deutscher Protestantenverein, founded in 1863 to oppose the 'bureaucratic church regime' of the orthodox Lutheran state church and to fight for a 'free Christianity'.²⁶ To be sure, as an organisation of the educated and commercial bourgeoisie, this association had a certain anti-Catholic animus; it responded to the ultramontane challenge with the concept of a national 'liberation history', in which an essentially Protestant small Germany struggled to emancipate itself from the 'despotic pressure of Rome'.²⁷ There were, nevertheless, numerous contacts between the cultural Protestants and the Old Catholics. There were compelling analogies between the two groups, both with respect to their reformist objectives and to their fundamental support for a secular state. In 1872, at an Old Catholic congress in Cologne, Johann Caspar Bluntschli, president of the Protestantenverein, called for a joint struggle against the 'double papacies' of orthodox Lutheranism and ultramontanism. In the Netherlands too, from the 1850s onwards, a 'new generation of liberals'²⁸ broke with the traditional anti-Catholicism to adopt a general anticlericalism. Like German cultural Protestantism, this new liberalism aimed to achieve reform within the church, a challenge that had culminated by the 1880s in a

²⁴ Cf. Norbert Schlossmacher, 'Entkirchlichung, Antultramontanismus und "nationalreligiöse Orientierungen" im Liberalismus der Kulturkampffära. Der Deutsche Verein für die Rheinprovinz', in Olaf Blaschke and Frank-Michael Kuhlemann (eds.), *Religion im Kaiserreich. Milieus – Mentalitäten – Krisen* (Gütersloh, 1996), 474–502.

²⁵ For an introduction, see Christoph Weber, 'Die liberale Reichspartei. Antultramontane Katholiken in der ersten Phase des Kulturkampfes', in Rudolf Lill and Francesco Traniello (eds.), *Der Kulturkampf in Italien und den deutschsprachigen Ländern* (Berlin, 1993), 251–5. For a more detailed account, see Helmut Steinsdorfer, *Die Liberale Reichspartei von 1871* (Stuttgart, 2000); Winfried Grohs, *Die Liberale Reichspartei 1871–1874. Liberale Katholiken und föderalistische Protestanten im ersten Deutschen Reichstag* (Frankfurt am Main, 1990).

²⁶ Gangolf Hübinger, *Kulturprotestantismus und Politik. Zum Verhältnis von Liberalismus und Protestantismus im wilhelminischen Deutschland* (Tübingen, 1994), 8, 23.

²⁷ Claudia Lepp, *Protestantisch-liberaler Aufbruch in die Moderne. Der deutsche Protestantenverein in der Zeit der Reichsgründung und des Kulturkampfes* (Gütersloh, 1996), 418.

²⁸ J. A. Bornewasser, 'Mythical Aspects of Dutch Anti-Catholicism in the Nineteenth Century', in J. S. Bromley and E. H. Kossmann (eds.), *Britain and the Netherlands*, vol. V: *Some Political Mythologies* (The Hague, 1975), 184–206, 189.

political alliance between the orthodox Protestants and Catholics to safeguard religious education. Only two decades earlier, the very idea of such a rapprochement would have seemed outlandish.²⁹

In England, the nonconformists turned against the Anglican state church. First in Ireland and later in Wales and England, they pressed for disestablishment. They regarded the Anglicanism of the 'high church' as a 'priestly religion', comparable with Catholicism and intrinsically authoritarian in character, since the clergyman was inserted as the intermediary between God and man.³⁰ This conflict within British Protestantism was naturally intensified by developments within Anglicanism. From the 1870s many Anglican parishes of the 'ritualistic' tendency adopted Catholic festive robes and ceremonies, reinforcing suspicions that the state church had embarked upon a process of 'Romanisation'. Even before the franchise reforms of 1832, nonconformists had perceived the Anglican hierarchy as deeply implicated in maintaining the 'old corruption'.³¹ Now the ritualists appeared, as a Wesleyan speaker observed in Bolton in 1873, 'to have taken up the work of popery in Protestant pulpits'.³²

On the issue of the disestablishment of the Anglican church in Ireland, which was finally enacted in 1869, the nonconformists worked closely with liberal-voting – though often also ultramontane-minded – Irish Catholics. However, when they mounted a campaign for mandatory secular schooling, the fragile coalition of Gladstonian liberalism broke apart, as Irish Catholics joined Anglican Tories in supporting state-financed religious education. Moreover, these two complex issues were over-layered by the hotly contested question of national autonomy for Ireland. Thus it came to pass that a Catholic priest in Glasgow urged immigrant Irish voters to support the local Conservative candidate – a vehemently anti-Catholic grand master of a Scottish masonic lodge – for the sake of state-financed Catholic education, while many of the Catholic voters in his constituency chose the Liberal candidate, because he supported Home Rule for Ireland.³³

In addition to liberal Catholicism and nonconformist-liberal Protestantism, religious minorities more generally were important reservoirs of anticlerical sentiment. In Hungary, for example, non-Catholic anticlericalism

²⁹ See also E. H. Kossmann, *The Low Countries, 1780–1940* (Oxford, 1978), 279.

³⁰ Eugenio F. Biagini, *Liberty, Retrenchment and Reform. Popular Liberalism in the Age of Gladstone, 1860–1880* (Cambridge, 1992), 217.

³¹ Eric J. Evans, 'The Church in Danger? Anticlericalism in Nineteenth-Century England', *European Studies Review* 13/2 (1983), 201–23, 203.

³² Cited in G. I. T. Machin, *Politics and the Churches in Great Britain 1869 to 1921* (Oxford, 1987), 55.

³³ *Ibid.*, 164. On the heterogeneous liberal alliance forged by Gladstone, see T. A. Jenkins, *The Liberal Ascendancy, 1830–1886* (London, 1994).

was fed by the emancipationist traditions of Magyar Calvinism, German Lutheranism and Serbian orthodoxy.³⁴ Then there were the Jewish communities of Europe, who favoured a secular state that would observe neutrality in religious questions, and in which they would be placed on an equal footing with other citizens, not merely in formal but also in societal terms. Many Jews thus supported liberal parties and media, a fact that furnished ultramontanes with a pretext for antisemitic conspiracy theories.³⁵

The anticlericalism of such groups was still affiliated with a specific religious outlook. For an anticlericalism founded upon religious indifference or irreligion, we must turn to the freemasons, or to the organisations and media of the free-thinkers in Europe, who disseminated an emphatically atheist and militant brand of anticlericalism. Freedom, tolerance, brotherhood and transcendence counted among the fundamental values of the masonic anthropology.³⁶ There was thus a close affinity between European freemasonry and the radical Enlightenment of the eighteenth century.³⁷ Masonic organisations contributed to that 'process of politicisation'³⁸ that accompanied the French Revolution. Yet, notwithstanding the Vatican's condemnation, it would be wrong to assume that freemasonry was hostile to the church from the very beginning. Only in the course of the nineteenth century and partly as a consequence of pressure from the Catholic hierarchy, did masonic organisations develop a more emphatically anticlerical orientation. Els Witte and John Bartier have shown for Belgium, for example, that the decision of the national hierarchy in 1838 to exclude freemasons from the sacraments prompted a radical transformation, in that believing Catholics now left the lodges and agnostics and atheists tended increasingly to join them.³⁹ But not until 1871 did Belgian freemasons delete

³⁴ Cf. Moritz Csáky, *Der Kulturkampf in Ungarn. Die kirchenpolitische Gesetzgebung der Jahre 1894/95* (Graz, Vienna and Cologne, 1967), 105; Péter, 'Hungarian Liberals', 80.

³⁵ For a discussion of this issue from a European perspective, see Johannes Rogalla von Bieberstein, *Die These von der Verschwörung 1776–1945. Philosophen, Freimaurer, Juden, Liberale und Sozialisten als Verschwörer gegen die Sozialordnung* (Berne and Frankfurt am Main, 1976); Johannes Rogalla von Bieberstein, 'Die These von der freimaurerischen Verschwörung', in Helmut Reinalter (ed.), *Freimaurer und Geheimbünde im 18. Jahrhundert in Mitteleuropa* (Frankfurt am Main, 1983), 85–111.

³⁶ Giuliano di Bernardo, *Die Freimaurer und ihr Menschenbild. Über die Philosophie der Freimaurer* (Vienna, 1989; Italian edn 1987), 160.

³⁷ Cf. Margaret C. Jacob, *The Radical Enlightenment. Pantheists, Freemasons and Republicans* (London, 1981), ch. 4.

³⁸ Helmut Reinalter, 'Freimaurerei und Demokratie im 18. Jahrhundert', in Reinalter (ed.), *Aufklärung und Geheimgesellschaften. Zur politischen Funktion und Sozialstruktur der Freimaurerlogen im 18. Jahrhundert* (Munich, 1989), 41–62, 61.

³⁹ Els Witte (ed.), *Documents relatifs à la franc-maçonnerie belge du XIXe siècle 1830–1855* (Leuven, 1973), 11; John Bartier, 'La franc-maçonnerie et les associations laïques en Belgique', in Hervé Hasquin (ed.), *Histoire de la laïcité, principalement en Belgique et en France* (Brussels, 1979), 177–99, 179–82.

the acclamation of the 'supreme architect' from their statutes. The French lodges of the Grand Orient followed suit in 1877.

As Helmut Reinalter has shown, the masonic movement contributed to an intensification of anticlericalism and of anti-church policies within liberalism, especially in the Latin countries, where the connections between the two were especially close.⁴⁰ In Spain, there were close links between the lodges and the liberal movement. Italian lodges played an important role in organising the 'Anti-Council' of Naples in 1869. The Italian grand master, Lemmi, boasted that the masonic liberal politician Francesco Crispi would soon see to it that 'the Vatican collapses under our thundering hammer... It is our aim to smash the stones of the Vatican in order to build with them the temple of the liberated nation.'⁴¹ The French freemasons developed an almost symbiotic relationship with the Radical Party of Georges Clemenceau, for which they even founded a support committee in 1894.⁴² As a movement of the social elites, the masonic movement had initially appeared suspect in the eyes of European socialists, but from the turn of the century relations between the two became increasingly close. This was as much the case for the SFIO, founded in France in 1905, as it was for the Italian PSI.

In France, according to Gérard Gayot, the freemasons were 'one of the most effective state-supporting forces in the civil society' of the Third Republic and exercised a strong influence on secular legislation.⁴³ Yet the *direct* political influence of masonic anticlericalism should not be overstated, even in the case of Italy, where its role in the nationalist activism against the Vatican was overshadowed by the *non*-masonic secret society of the Carbonari.⁴⁴ Moreover, Peter Stadler has shown for Switzerland that of the 5 per cent of Progressive deputies in the Nationalrat in Berne who were freemasons, a number actually supported a policy of compromise in the *Kulturkampf*.⁴⁵ Our conclusions as to the broader social and political resonance of the masonic movement must in any case remain tentative – we still know far too little about its social base, its capacity to mobilise

⁴⁰ Helmut Reinalter, *Die Freimaurer* (Munich, 2000), 24.

⁴¹ Cited in Dieter A. Binder, *Die diskrete Gesellschaft. Geschichte und Symbolik der Freimaurer*, 2nd edn (Graz, Vienna and Cologne, 1995), 56.

⁴² Martin Papenheim, 'Zirkel, Winkelmaß und Trikolore. Politik und Freimaurerei in Frankreich während der III. Republik', in *Internationale Freimaurerforschung* (2003, forthcoming).

⁴³ Gérard Gayot, *La franc-maçonnerie française* (Paris, 1980), 237.

⁴⁴ Guido Verucci, 'Antiklerikalismus und Laizismus in den Jahren des Kulturkampfes', in Lill and Traniello, *Der Kulturkampf*, 27–56, 41; Adrian Lyttelton, 'An Old Church and a New State: Italian Anticlericalism 1876–1915', *European Studies Review* 13/2 (1983), 225–48, 230.

⁴⁵ Peter Stadler, *Der Kulturkampf in der Schweiz. Eidgenossenschaft und katholische Kirche im europäischen Umkreis 1848–1888* (Frankenfeld and Stuttgart, 1984), 369.

support and its 'capacity to shape experiences of everyday life' within the population.⁴⁶

The same can be said of those societies of free-thinkers who, by contrast with the freemasons, operated in demonstratively public fashion. These had developed first in England and later spread across the European continent. Whereas the masonic movement was predominantly middle-class in composition, the free-thinkers tended increasingly, towards the end of the nineteenth century, to be drawn from the lower-middle and working classes. The societies often split internally and/or institutionally into a moderate liberal/bourgeois tendency and a militant anticlerical wing that was generally led by members of the labour aristocracy and cultivated close political links with the socialist parties.⁴⁷ In France under the Third Republic, the free-thinkers boasted a network of some 1,000 clubs with prominent members such as Victor Hugo and Aristide Briand; through their publications, *L'Excommunié* and *La Libre Pensée* in France and the *Free Thinker* in England, they were able to exert a certain influence in the political domain.

The free-thinkers were characterised by an increasingly strong tendency towards atheism. In a commentary on the Vatican Council, for example, *La Libre Pensée* mocked the pope as 'vice-God' and declared that 'God' was responsible for every oppression, for every enslavement and for every tyranny, and was thus the sworn 'enemy' of all free-thinkers.⁴⁸ Atheistic free-thinkers strove not merely for a secularised society, but for one purged of religion altogether. They developed their own public rituals, such as civil burials, ceremonies of youth initiation (to replace confirmation) and communal festivals that were deliberately held on Sundays. Militant free-thinkers also went to great pains to subject religion and the faithful to public mockery. Since they tended to assign a higher priority to individual intellectual emancipation than to economic and social reforms, their relationship with the anticlerical socialism of the Marxist variety was generally ambivalent. The Italian Luigi Stefanoni, who called in 1872 for the foundation of a world-wide society of rationalists, accused Karl Marx of seeking merely to erect the dictatorship of a particular class, rather than advancing intellectual emancipation.⁴⁹ Free-thinkers regarded anticlerical Protestants, such as the Methodists and Calvinists in England – justifiably in many cases – as more intolerant and fanatically religious than the state

⁴⁶ Papenheim, 'Zirkel, Winkelmaß und Trikolore'.

⁴⁷ Cf. Els Witte, 'De Belgische Vrijdenkersorganisaties (1854–1914). Ontstaan, Ontwikkeling en Rol', *Tijdschrift voor de Studie van de Verlichting* 5/2 (1977), 127–286, 130–41; Jacqueline Lalouette, *La libre pensée en France 1848–1940* (Paris, 1997), 15–18.

⁴⁸ *La Libre Pensée*, 19 February 1870, 12 March 1870.

⁴⁹ Guido Vercuci, *L'Italia laica prima e dopo l'unità. Anticlericalismo, libero pensiero e ateismo nella società italiana* (Rome, 1981), 229.

churches. This hardly augured well for concerted actions in support of an accelerated secularisation of European society.⁵⁰

The European parties did not operate in a political vacuum. They articulated an anticlericalism with deep social roots in an environment that was being transformed by parliamentarisation and democratisation. It can thus be said of the liberal parties that had gained power in most of the European countries by the 1870s that they carried an already virulent societal conflict into state institutions and then in turn escalated that conflict through their legislative initiatives. And yet it can hardly be said that political liberalism in the European countries was hostile to churches as such. On the contrary: it was suffused with Protestant values and, in any case, the liberalisation and diversification of religious observance had advanced much further within Protestant communities than it had within the Catholic church.⁵¹ In the Habsburg Monarchy, to be sure, the liberals wished to establish the authority of the liberal state over the Catholic church, but they valued the church nonetheless as a guarantor of social and supranational stability in a period of growing national conflict.⁵² By contrast, the secularism of liberal republicans in France and Spain was firmly anchored in the revolutionary traditions of those countries and therefore retained a more stringently anticlerical flavour.⁵³

In order to realise their programmes of secularisation, liberal parties often used measures that appear illiberal from a present-day standpoint.⁵⁴ Writing of the German liberals, Gordon Craig has attributed this readiness to employ coercive means to a fit of 'doctrinal intoxication', in which they temporarily forgot their own principles.⁵⁵ By contrast, Helmut Walser Smith has shown that repressive measures were thoroughly reconcilable with liberal ideology.⁵⁶ The liberal state was, so to speak, 'their' state, which they had established against the clericals: the small-German empire against

⁵⁰ Evans, 'The Church in Danger?', 217.

⁵¹ See, for Germany, Dieter Langewiesche, *Liberalismus in Deutschland* (Frankfurt am Main, 1988), 188.

⁵² Karl Vocelka, 'Der Kulturkampf in der Cisleithanischen Reichshälfte der Habsburgermonarchie', in Lill and Traniello, *Der Kulturkampf*, 355–66, 363; Karl Vocelka, *Verfassung oder Konkordat? Der publizistische Kampf der österreichischen Liberalen um die Religionsgesetze des Jahres 1868* (Vienna, 1978), 177.

⁵³ For Spain, see the general account in Isabel Burdiel, 'Myths of Failure, Myths of Success: New Perspectives on Nineteenth-Century Spanish Liberalism', *Journal of Modern History* 70 (1998), 892–912.

⁵⁴ Cf. the overview in Ronald J. Ross, *The Failure of Bismarck's Kulturkampf. Catholicism and State Power in Imperial Germany, 1871–1887* (Washington D.C., 1998), 6–8.

⁵⁵ Gordon A. Craig, *Deutsche Geschichte 1866–1945. Vom Norddeutschen Bund bis zum Ende des Dritten Reiches* (Munich, 1980), 79.

⁵⁶ Helmut Walser Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict: Culture, Ideology, Politics 1870–1914* (Princeton, 1995), 37–41; implicitly also in James J. Sheehan, *Der deutsche Liberalismus von den Anfängen im 18. Jahrhundert bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg 1770–1914* (Munich, 1983; English edn 1978), 163.

Catholic Austria and the dynastic orthodox Lutheranism of Prussia; the liberal government in post-Compromise Austria against the conservative Catholic regime of the 1850s; the Third Republic in France against the Second Empire of Napoleon III, who had initially oriented his policy towards the French Catholics; the liberal monarchy in Spain after 1868 against the church-backed Queen Isabella and the *estado moderado*;⁵⁷ and the Italian nation-state against the Vatican state – with armed force in this case – and against the papacy itself. Nor did the liberals believe that the Catholic church would recognise the autonomy of the new state order, with its changed political rules. Thus the Hungarian minister of justice Boldizsár Horváth wrote during the Council to the anti-infallibilist Bishop Kovács in Rome that it was quite ‘senseless to say that the power of the papacy concerns itself only with the inner affairs of religion. We have seen, and the “Syllabus” proves it too, that papal power either does not perceive or will not respect the line of demarcation between the external and the internal affairs of religion.’⁵⁸ Only if it operated strictly within the framework of the new liberal order could the church lay claim to liberal tolerance.

In the context of an expanding franchise, the liberals hoped that their secularising policies would help them to acquire popularity without becoming populist. By contrast, radical democrats waged a highly charged anti-clerical campaign characterised by a more pronounced hostility to church institutions as such. The sometimes blurred boundary between liberals and democrats dated back to the revolutions of 1789 and 1848: it could be discerned between ‘opportunist’ republicans and radicals in France, between the exponents of the Compromise with Austria in 1867 and those of the national revolution of 1848 in Hungary, and between Whigs and radicals in England. The radical democrats were not merely concerned with the assertion of state supremacy; in a far more comprehensive sense they saw the institutional church as a massive obstacle on the path to greater political, economic and social progress.⁵⁹ Within the broader anticlerical alliance, the radicals countered the moderate liberals with an extreme programme of systematic secularisation. The radical-liberal deputies Kálmán Ghyczy and Ferenc Pulszky, associates of the exiled Lajos Kossuth responded to the Council in February 1870 with a demand for the nationalisation of the entire property of the Catholic church – a proposal that only narrowly failed

⁵⁷ Cf. William J. Callahan, *Church, Politics, and Society in Spain, 1750–1874* (Cambridge, Mass., 1984), 248.

⁵⁸ Cited in Gabriel Adriányi, *Ungarn und das I. Vatikanum* (Cologne and Vienna, 1975), 273.

⁵⁹ On this issue in Belgium, see Achille Erba, *L'esprit laïque en Belgique sous le gouvernement libéral doctrinaire (1857–1870) d'après les brochures politiques* (Leuven, 1967), 10–28.

in the Hungarian parliament.⁶⁰ In France, radicals within the heterogeneous republican alliance pressed for the prohibition of the Jesuits, which duly followed in 1880. According to the radical newspaper *La Lanterne*, it was a question 'of the great battle between the old and the new world, between absolutism and freedom'.⁶¹ New laws might suppress the Jesuits, the leading radical minister Edouard Lockroy observed, but they could not eliminate 'Jesuitism' in the form of an ultramontane clericalism within church institutions and more generally in society as a whole.⁶² For many radical democrats, the conflict with the clericals was therefore an endless 'fight without mercy'.⁶³

Even more militantly anticlerical were the socialists and anarchists. Whereas the liberals, particularly in the less economically developed states of southern Europe, were convinced that the Catholic church, as a conservative force, was blocking the breakthrough to a modern industrial society, the socialists denounced it as 'the fifth column of international capitalism',⁶⁴ because it made common cause with the ruling classes of the large landowners and captains of industry in hindering the necessary resistance of rural and industrial labourers against their economic exploitation. The anticlerical alliance that spanned the spectrum from moderate liberals to revolutionary socialists was in this sense latently unstable. At any time, it could be split from within by the contradictory socio-economic objectives of the groups within it. Nevertheless, a common anticlerical basis remained, especially in Latin Europe, where socialism of the non-doctrinaire Marxist variety retained the pragmatic habits of the radical-democratic tradition. The Belgian socialists, for example, regarded their atheistic struggle against the church as an indispensable precondition for the overcoming of 'all other forms of despotism'. César de Paepe, one of their most influential formative theorists, was a committed free-thinker. The socialists also had close links with freemasonry and with the academic world of the anticlerical Université Libre in Brussels. As a consequence one could speak of a 'kind of osmosis [in Belgium] between the liberal left, which was vehemently anticlerical, and socialist thought'.⁶⁵ In Italy, the mysticism associated with Mazzini and Garibaldi remained influential, so that here too socialist anticlericalism

⁶⁰ Adriányi, *Ungarn*, 280.

⁶¹ Cited in Geoffrey Cubitt, *The Jesuit Myth. Conspiracy Theory and Politics in Nineteenth-Century France* (Oxford, 1993), 167.

⁶² Cited in *ibid.*, 174.

⁶³ Emile Poulat, *Liberté, laïcité. La guerre des deux France et le principe de la modernité* (Paris, 1987), 199.

⁶⁴ Stefano Pivato, *Clericalismo e laicismo nella cultura popolare italiana* (Milan, 1990), 92.

⁶⁵ Philippe Moureaux, 'Le socialisme, la laïcité et l'état (1865-1958)', in Hasquin, *Histoire de la laïcité*, III-13.

retained a certain liberal imprint.⁶⁶ The Italian case also illustrates particularly clearly how some southern European socialists developed a distinctive iconography of socialist evangelism that drew on religious prototypes, and in which Christ was presented as 'the first socialist' in an effort to exploit the popular piety of the rural masses.⁶⁷

Themes of anticlerical propaganda

A central topos of anticlerical discourse during the culture-war era was the notion that the hierarchical organisation of the Catholic church and the centralist-authoritarian tendencies of ultramontanism were fundamentally irreconcilable with the liberal-democratic image of the individual as an autonomous, rational being. According to this view, freedom and a capacity to choose for oneself were anchored in the reason implanted in every individual.⁶⁸ Dogmatic articles of faith of the kind propagated by Pope Pius IX were completely irreconcilable with this rationalist model.⁶⁹ Thus the German liberal historian and politician Johann Gustav Droysen described the Immaculate Conception of Mary, which was raised by Pius IX to the status of dogma in 1854, as 'idolatry' for the as yet unenlightened and unemancipated 'rabble [*Pöbel*]'.⁷⁰ Among many anticlericals, even in southern Europe, there was a tendency to regard Protestantism as the lesser evil. After all, it had insisted upon the priority of individual conscience over the external authority of the Catholic church. It had largely renounced the excessive mysticism and ornament that went with the Latin rite; and it permitted clergymen to marry and to lead a conventional family life. For radical atheistic anticlericals, of course, these were merely marginal differences: thus *L'Excommunié*, the free-thinking newspaper from Lyon, mocked the notion of the Trinity as lumping together 'the owner of the universe, a dove and an Easter lamb',⁷¹ and a blasphemous tract adorned with pornographic motifs ridiculed the Eucharist as 'the God that one eats'.⁷²

This commitment to the free intellectual development of every individual person also explains why the question of education had such enormous significance for anticlericals across Europe: 'Your freedom, your rights, your emancipation from every injustice in your social position', declared

⁶⁶ Verucci, 'Antiklerikalismus', 43; Verucci, *L'Italia*, 179. ⁶⁷ Cf. Pivato, *Clericalismo*, 66–85.

⁶⁸ Massimo Salvadori, *European Liberalism* (New York and London, 1972), 4.

⁶⁹ See also J. Salwyn Schapiro, 'Was ist Liberalismus?', in Lothar Gall (ed.), *Liberalismus* (Cologne, 1976), 20–36.

⁷⁰ Cited in Langewiesche, *Liberalismus*, 181. ⁷¹ *L'Excommunié*, 3 April 1881.

⁷² Lalouette, *La libre pensée*, 186. For a discussion of the relationship between blasphemy and anticlericalism over the *longue durée*, see Alain Cabantuos, *Geschichte der Blasphemie* (Weimar, 1999; French edn 1998).

the nonconformist John Wilson (borrowing the words of Mazzini), 'all depend upon the degree of education that you can attain.'⁷³ The purpose of secular schools was to educate responsible citizens by implanting in them a capacity for independent and rational thought and action. Only by this means could pupils shake off the false values of ignorance, superstition and the exaggerated fear of God that were supposedly instilled in them by the Catholic hierarchy. The more emphatically the Catholic church rejected the modern societal model of the liberals, the more importance anticlerical groups came to attach to secular schooling. In the *Syllabus errorum*, where the pope denounced liberalism as 'the error of the century', the Protestant publicist and political theorist Bluntschli discerned a 'monumental declaration of war against the entirety of science, against the modern state, against contemporary education'. Only a decisive campaign by the anticlericals would resolve the issue.⁷⁴ For European anticlericals, the dogma of papal infallibility agreed at the Vatican Council of 1870 was the final proof that the Catholic church remained fundamentally unenlightened both in its structure and in its doctrine.⁷⁵

Anticlericals reproached the church for deliberately holding the individual believer in a condition of ignorance and dependence in a period of rapid political, economic and social change. By this means, they argued – and this constituted a further central topos of their critique – that the church and ultramontanism actually hindered societal modernisation.⁷⁶ Every form of compulsion that the Catholic church employed curtailed the operations of that free individual will that was the driving force of reform.⁷⁷ Then there was the fact that ultramontanism appeared openly opposed to modern industrial society and focused instead on the old middle classes of the skilled crafts and the self-employed as the social basis for a return to a pre-industrial society suffused with Christian values.⁷⁸ In Spain, priests were even known to have taken up arms in support of the political and economic *ancien régime*.⁷⁹

⁷³ Cited in Biagini, *Liberty*, 194.

⁷⁴ Cited in Lepp, *Protestantisch-liberaler Aufbruch*, 320.

⁷⁵ For England see E. R. Norman, *Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England* (London, 1968), 14; for Switzerland, Heidi Bossard-Borner, 'Kantonale Refugien und katholisches Ghetto. Zur Lage der Unterlegenen', in Binnenkade and Mattioli, *Die Innerschweiz*, 61–76, 64–5.

⁷⁶ On this phenomenon in Spain, see Moliner Prada, 'Anticlericalismo', 92.

⁷⁷ D. J. Manning, *Liberalism* (London, 1976), 16.

⁷⁸ Thomas Mergel, 'Ultramontanism, Liberalism, Moderation: Political Mentalities and Political Behavior of the German Catholic Bürgertum, 1848–1914', *Central European History* 29/2 (1996), 165. See also the contribution to this volume by Christopher Clark.

⁷⁹ Joan Connelly Ullman, 'The Warp and Woof of Parliamentary Politics in Spain, 1808–1939: Anticlericalism versus "Neo-Catholicism"', *European Studies Review* 13/2 (1983), 145–76, 146.

Anticlericals in Latin Europe routinely compared the state of socio-economic development in their countries with that in the 'Protestant' nations. Great Britain, Germany and the United States were more fully industrialised and economically more successful; long before the sociological interpretations of Max Weber appeared on the scene, anticlerical liberals and radicals had drawn a connection between this state of affairs and the retardative impact of Catholicism. Thus, it was fashionable among French intellectuals in the 1870s to praise Protestantism for its progressive outlook,⁸⁰ while in Italy many liberals were impressed by the economic integration and expansion of the Protestant-dominated German Empire.⁸¹ In an intellectual environment suffused by social Darwinism and marked by tense debates over the competitiveness of national economies, widespread collective anxieties lent this topos a particular political urgency, especially in France where the allegation of national 'decadence' was a recurrent theme in domestic political discussion.

Who was responsible for this underdevelopment? In their search for a suitable scapegoat, the anticlericals could draw on Edgar Quinet's universal-historical account, which argued that the Jesuits were responsible for the decline of the southern European powers in the modern era.⁸² The anti-Jesuit conspiracy theory in turn fed a third central topos of anticlerical discourse: the idea that the Catholic church, on account of its supranational organisation and doctrine, was not 'nationally reliable'. This claim appeared to be borne out by an influential interpretation of the *Syllabus errorum* which postulated that the Catholic church assigned to its own 'private system of law ... fundamental and absolute priority over state legislation'. The Vatican, so the argument ran, therefore found itself in 'a continuous state of latent war' with *every* 'modern state'.⁸³ From this perspective, the church appeared to constitute a state within the state, hierarchically led from outside the borders of the country and organised through transnationally affiliated religious orders. The more emphatically the church overlooked or ignored the boundaries between secular/civil and spiritual obedience, the greater was the threat it appeared to pose to liberal politics. For European anticlericals, therefore, the dogma of papal infallibility, regardless of the

⁸⁰ Koenraad Swart, *The Sense of Decadence in Nineteenth-Century France* (The Hague, 1964), 132.

⁸¹ For a general discussion, see, Otto Weiss, 'Staat, Regierung und Parlament im Norddeutschen Bund und im Kaiserreich im Urteil der Italiener (1866–1914)', *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken* 66 (1986), 310–77. On Protestant views concerning the retardative effect of Catholicism, see, for example on the Netherlands, Bornewasser, 'Mythical Aspects', 191, and for England, Norman, *Anti-Catholicism*, 18.

⁸² Edgar Quinet, *Des Jésuites* (Paris, 1845).

⁸³ Leopold Karl Goetz, *Der Ultramontanismus als Weltanschauung auf Grund des Syllabus quellenmäßig dargestellt* (Bonn, 1905), 291.

internal ecclesiological concerns that motivated it, constituted 'a provocation too great to be met with supercilious indifference'.⁸⁴

In several predominantly Protestant countries, the latent fear of 'foreign' intervention awakened collective memories of papal support for the Catholic powers. This was above all the case in the Netherlands, where the Calvinists, even at the end of the nineteenth century, tended to associate themselves with the nation and the monarchy while they continued to call the Catholics the 'Spanish-Roman party'.⁸⁵ This was also true for England, where Protestant memory of the destruction of the Spanish armada in 1588 was still publicly celebrated along with the gunpowder plot of 1605 and the suppression of the last uprising of the Catholic Stuarts in 1745. In the Swiss Nationalrat, twenty years after the *Sonderbund* War, some liberals argued against the eligibility of priests for election on the grounds that, as 'Roman citizens', they were nationally unreliable.⁸⁶ In Germany and England, such concerns were further stimulated by national claims to autonomy or independence from the Polish and Irish ethnic minorities.

Especially subversive in the eyes of the anticlericals was the Society of Jesus founded by Ignatius Loyola in 1540. Their agitation against the Jesuits was as much a pan-European phenomenon as the antisemitism of the ultramontanes. According to an article in the liberal Viennese newspaper *Neue Freie Presse*, the Jesuits merely used the papacy in order 'to convey the Society of Jesus to the summit of that power from which it will be able to rule the peoples and states as its tributaries'.⁸⁷ In the *département* of Isère, an area known for its anticlerical sentiments, the French republican politician Léon Gambetta gave a speech in 1878, in which he observed that 'in the history [of the Jesuits] one thing is clear, namely that bad times for our country are always good times for the Jesuits'.⁸⁸ The German liberal Eduard Windhorst declared that 'the greatest barrier' to the integration of the German Reich and to its economic success was 'the universally polluting and suffocating spirit of Jesuitism, which has unfortunately affected far too many in our Fatherland'.⁸⁹ To a certain extent, this was an anti-Jesuitism without Jesuits: in the entire German Reich there were only 211 members of the society in 1870.⁹⁰ For the European anticlericals the spectacle of a

⁸⁴ Aldo A. Mola, *Storia della massoneria italiana delle origini ai nostri giorni* (Milan, 1992), 133.

⁸⁵ Bornewasser, 'Mythical Aspects', 200. See also Henk te Velde, *Gemeenschapspzin en plichtsbeseft. Liberalisme en Nationalisme in Nederland, 1870–1918* (The Hague, 1992), 37.

⁸⁶ Borner, *Zwischen Sonderbund und Kulturkampf*, 158. ⁸⁷ *Neue Freie Presse*, 25 March 1868.

⁸⁸ Cited in Gadille, 'On French Anticlericalism', 128.

⁸⁹ Cited from the English translation in Gross, 'Kulturkampf and Unification', 363.

⁹⁰ Margaret Lavinia Anderson, *Practicing Democracy. Elections and Political Culture in Imperial Germany* (Princeton, 2000), 81. Cf. also Margaret Lavinia Anderson, 'The Kulturkampf and the Course of German History', *Central European History* 19/1 (1986), 82–115.

stealthily expanding 'Jesuitism' became an especially useful synonym for ultramontanist. It was a recurrent theme in political debate and a battle-cry in the 'struggle against Rome' extolled by the combative (and latterly pro-Bismarckian) German satirical journal *Kladderadatsch*.⁹¹

EUROPEAN PUBLIC SPHERE, CULTURAL TRANSFER AND MODES OF ANTICLERICAL REPRESENTATION

The nationalist animus in much anti-Vatican rhetoric has distracted the attention of historians from the European dimension of the anticlerical campaign. The Catholic church may not have been as supranational or as hierarchical as its contemporary opponents claimed. Nevertheless, European anticlericals dedicated themselves to a common struggle against a 'black international' that implicated them to a certain extent in transnational commitments. This perception of the culture war could draw on a collective culture of anticlerical memory, in which the church from the Inquisition to 1848 had always supported 'reactionary' forces. In predominantly Protestant countries, this memory was underscored by confessional antagonisms. Thus, for example, in nineteenth-century England, the St Bartholomew's Day massacre of the French Huguenots in 1572 was so often recalled in sermon and print that it was just about as familiar to Victorians as the Bible itself.⁹² And the European dimension was also implicit in the ideology of anticlericalism. Liberalism was an international worldview with universal principles, even if these were primarily applied to the nation-state. Both the anti-monarchism of the radicals and the anti-capitalism of the socialists were conceived in internationalist terms. Both for the freemasons and for the free-thinkers it can be said that the activists within the different states regarded themselves as part of a broader front engaging the same opponent at a European level.⁹³ Lastly, there was the fact that the ultramontane policy of the Vatican was perceived as a supranational political challenge that could not be countered on a merely national basis.

The culture wars helped to generate a transnational public sphere in which events and conflicts were transmitted by media networks. This was achieved above all through intensive reportage in newspapers whose print-run and distribution, both through street sales and through public libraries, grew dramatically from the 1850s onwards. Newspapers often printed or translated articles by foreign authors. The free-thinking journal *La Libre Pensée*, for example, regularly printed texts by German and English

⁹¹ *Kladderadatsch*, 3 August 1873.

⁹² Norman, *Anti-Catholicism*, 13.

⁹³ Verucci, 'Antiklerikalismus', 37.

free-thinkers. Editorial committees frequently reprinted articles published in foreign newspapers. This was just as true of renowned daily papers, such as the German-language *Pester Lloyd*, which published texts from the *Augsburger Allgemeine*, the *Neue Freie Presse* and *The Times*,⁹⁴ as it was of free-thinking titles like the Italian *Gazzetto del Popolo*, which published articles from *La Libre Pensée*, the *Rationaliste*, *La Pensée Nouvelle* and *La Libertad de Pensamiento*.⁹⁵ Nineteenth-century newspapers tended in any case to report far more fully on European (as opposed to domestic) news than is the case today. This applied especially to pan-European themes like the culture wars. Liberal newspapers did not confine themselves to referring to other like-minded papers; as Karl Vocelka has shown, they also engaged with 'enemy' foreign media, such as the ultramontane French journal *L'Univers*.⁹⁶

In this partially transnational public sphere, the European dimension of anticlericalism comprised four central elements. Firstly, key texts and popular books reflecting the most important contemporary intellectual developments were translated and distributed across national borders, so that anticlericals could draw to a substantial extent upon shared cultural resources. Secondly, there were at least the beginnings of intergovernmental and transnational social organisation and coordinated action against ultramontanism. Thirdly, contacts between anticlerical elites, combined with newspaper reportage greatly facilitated the exchange of information between the various flashpoints of culture war; the resulting cultural transfer enabled the 'models' of action established in one state to be adapted or critiqued in another. Lastly, the energies generated by conflict in one state raised the emotional temperature among anticlericals in other states and could even trigger spontaneous local protests and violence. The sense of solidarity that resulted was reflected in the emergence of very similar patterns of anticlerical visual representation, especially in the form of caricature.

Already in its early phases, European liberalism had a common basis. Moritz Csáky has shown for Hungary that the early exponents of liberalism drew on British tracts and discourses in the *Edinburgh Review* and in other periodicals, as well as on French thinkers such as Alexis de Tocqueville and Benjamin Constant.⁹⁷ In the second half of the nineteenth century, positivism, materialism and Darwin-inspired scientific theories were among the most important intellectual tendencies informing European anticlericalism. In German-speaking Europe and beyond, Ludwig Feuerbach's critique of

⁹⁴ Cf. Adriányi, *Ungarn und das I. Vatikanum*, 282. ⁹⁵ Cf. Verucci, *L'Italia*, 187.

⁹⁶ Vocelka, *Verfassung oder Konkordat?*, 98. ⁹⁷ Csáky, *Der Kulturkampf*, 18.

religion and Arthur Schopenhauer's pessimistic atheism inspired religious indifference, atheism and hostility to the churches. Ludwig Büchner's positivist work *Kraft und Stoff*, published in 1855, was widely read, not only in Germany, but also in the Netherlands and in Flanders; in 1868 it was published in Italian as *Forze e materia*, and by 1892 seventeen editions had been published in French. The German zoologist Ernst Haeckel made an important contribution to the popularisation in continental Europe of Charles Darwin's theses, which put an end to the idea of man as a being created in the image of God and strengthened anticlerical resistance to the hermeneutic authority of religion in modern society.⁹⁸ Alongside these German influences, which were particularly important for the Habsburg Monarchy, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Flanders and, intermittently, also in France and Italy,⁹⁹ the French Third Republic emerged as a second centre of gravity for European anticlericalism, especially for francophone Belgium and southern Europe.

If anticlericalism thrived on a largely shared intellectual foundation, then this was not merely because of the Europe-wide reception of important philosophical or scientific writings; equally significant was a transnational bourgeois culture that popularised secularist ideas and intensified anticlerical emotions. The theatre played a particularly important role in sustaining this culture. Molière's *Tartuffe*, in which a Catholic priest preaches poverty but lives in wealth and luxury, was widely played across Europe and strengthened existing prejudices against the Catholic church and the clergy. In a less exalted mode the play *Der Pfarrer von Kirchfeld*, first performed at the Theater an der Wien in 1871, shortly after the Vatican Council, was repeatedly performed on German-language stages throughout central Europe before enthusiastic audiences drawn from all social strata.¹⁰⁰ The play told the story of a village priest who is removed from office on the instruction of the pope because he has permitted both a 'mixed marriage' and the church burial of a woman who had committed suicide out of despair over the atheism of her son. Theatre pieces of this kind, together with much-translated contemporary novels of anticlerical character focused above all on the allegedly hypocritical morality of the church, questioned ecclesiastical authority and encouraged the anticlericals in their struggle against ultramontane influences in European society.

⁹⁸ Cf. Thomas Nipperdey, *Religion in Umbruch. Deutschland 1870–1918* (Munich, 1988), 124–9; Witte, 'De Belgische Vrijdenkersorganisaties', 164–8; Kossmann, *The Low Countries*, 214–18; Verucci, *L'Italia*, 183–7.

⁹⁹ On French reactions to the German *Kulturkampf*, see Allen Mitchell, *Victors and Vanquished. The German Influence on Army and Church in France after 1870* (Chapel Hill, 1984), 139.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Craig, *Deutsche Geschichte*, 72.

The ultramontane challenge never generated sufficient dread among anticlericals to prompt concerted action against the Vatican state by the liberal-led governments of Europe. The liberal Bavarian Minister-President Hohenlohe certainly attempted to found such an international coalition when, on the eve of the Council and in the expectation of the imminent declaration of papal infallibility, he issued his Circular Despatch of 9 April 1869, warning against the 'danger of incursions' into the 'sphere of the state'.¹⁰¹ Shortly thereafter, in March 1870, the Paris government of the liberalised Second Empire made tentative efforts to coordinate government reactions to the expected consequences of the Council. There was considerable sympathy within many liberal administrations for such joint action. The Viennese administration conducted discussions with Minister-Presidents Count von Taaffe and Gyula Andrassy, but ultimately decided to wait and see how serious the papal provocations would be.¹⁰² Like Bismarck, the National Liberals in Prussia had no desire unnecessarily to alienate the Polish minority and thereby jeopardise the unity of the Reich. Although Gladstone would have welcomed an anti-Vatican initiative on the part of the continental European powers, in the domestic context he depended upon the support of the Catholic Irish and the archbishop of Westminster, H. E. Manning, who was regarded both in the United Kingdom and at the Council as 'the leader, whip and wirepuller of the ultramontanists'.¹⁰³ Once it became clear that the pope would confine himself to an internal ecclesiastical definition of infallibility, a governmental initiative no longer appeared so necessary. Nonetheless, some liberals hoped, like the English foreign minister Lord Clarendon, that the teaching and doctrines of the church would gradually be taken to such absurd extremes 'as the common sense of mankind may thereby be awakened and *possibly* impelled to revolt'.¹⁰⁴ From the papal perspective, of course, it sufficed that the liberal governments responded to the annexation of what remained of the Papal States and the occupation of Rome by Italian troops with benign tolerance.

In addition to interstate diplomatic contacts there were transnational political and societal networks. Organised transnational cooperation among

¹⁰¹ Winfried Becker, 'Otto von Bismarcks Rolle bei Ausbruch, Verschärfung und Beilegung des preußischen Kulturkampfes', in Lill and Traniello, *Der Kulturkampf*, 57–85, 62. Cf. also Rudolf Lill, 'Einleitung: Kulturkämpfe im 19. Jahrhundert', in *ibid.*, 9–26, 18.

¹⁰² Adriányi, *Ungarn und das I. Vatikanum*, 269.

¹⁰³ Matthew, *Gladstone*, 185. On the sympathy of Queen Victoria for the European struggle against 'priestly tyranny', see J. P. Parry, *Democracy and Religion. Gladstone and the Liberal Party, 1867–1875* (Cambridge, 1986), 127.

¹⁰⁴ Clarendon to Odo Russell, 28 June 1869, cited in H. C. G. Matthew, 'Gladstone, Vaticanism, and the Question of the East', in Derek Baker (ed.), *Religious Motivation: Biographical and Sociological Problems for the Church Historian*, Studies in Church History XV (Oxford, 1978), 417–42, 429.

radical democrats had begun with Giuseppe Mazzini, who had founded the group Young Europe in 1830 during his exile in Berne; the group survived until 1836. In 1850, Mazzini together with the French democrat Alexandre Ledru-Rollin, both of whom were now living as exiles in London, founded the Comité Central Démocratique Européen as a 'Holy Alliance of the peoples'. It survived until the abortive Milan uprising of 1853. It was later succeeded by the Ligue Internationale et Permanente de la Paix founded in Paris in 1867, with the support of Victor Hugo, Jules Simon, Giuseppe Garibaldi, John Stuart Mill and the revolutionary minister from Baden, Amand Goegg.¹⁰⁵ The socialists also constructed a European forum in the form of the International Working Men's Association (from 1864) and the Second International (from 1889).¹⁰⁶ As for the freemasons, the very existence of a system of lodges itself facilitated transnational contacts, especially for middle-class democratic and socialist exiles in London after 1848–9.¹⁰⁷ The European free-thinkers founded their own Association Internationale de Libres Penseurs in 1862, which was based in Heidelberg and appears to have been dominated by French Blanquists, but about whose activities very little is known.¹⁰⁸ Even the anticlerical confessional organisations cultivated cross-border contacts, as in the case, for example, of the Deutscher Protestantenverein in the Netherlands, Switzerland and Great Britain.¹⁰⁹

The transnational involvement of these organisations in the culture was confined itself largely to joint proclamations and the dissemination through the media of public assertions of solidarity. At the Congress of the First International in 1869, for example, the delegates agreed an anticlerical resolution against Rome and Paris as 'the capital cities of an apocalyptic monster with two heads, the crowned and mitred double tyranny of the Catholic monarchical Janus, Pope and Emperor [Napoleon III]'.¹¹⁰ At the 'London Meeting' of 27 January 1874, English liberals declared their support for the Prussian-German campaign against the church and toasted the comradeship-in-arms of both nations in the great cultural struggle against ultramontanism.¹¹¹ What German liberals sought from such international connections was a consolidation of their social position in the face of an increasingly state-dominated *Kulturkampf*. From April 1869, the Italian parliamentarian Giuseppe Ricciardi attempted to organise a

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Alwin Hanschmidt, *Republikanisch-demokratischer Internationalismus im 19. Jahrhundert. Ideen – Formen – Orientierungsversuche* (Husum, 1977), 28–30, 69–75, 85–98.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. James Joll, *The Second International 1889–1914* (London and Boston, 1974).

¹⁰⁷ Hanschmidt, *Republikanisch-demokratischer Internationalismus*, 36.

¹⁰⁸ Lalouette, *La libre pensée*, 33.

¹⁰⁹ Hübinger, *Kulturprotestantismus*, 24.

¹¹⁰ Cited in Biagini, *Liberty*, 225.

¹¹¹ Cited in Lepp, *Protestantisch-liberaler Aufbruch*, 349.

European anticlerical mass demonstration with the assistance of Italian lodges and free-thinkers. The Anti-Council was scheduled to open in Naples on 8 December 1869, the first day of the Vatican Council. Ricciardi did succeed in procuring declarations from prominent anticlericals such as Victor Hugo and Edgar Quinet, who compared Pius IX with Napoleon Bonaparte and prophesied that the consequences of the Council would confront the pope with his own personal Waterloo.¹¹² All in all, however, relatively few foreign anticlericals took part, so that the event remained a largely Italian affair.¹¹³

These organised political and social networks were supplemented by personal contacts. Gladstone, for example, had become acquainted with the theology professor Ignaz Döllinger during a visit to his sister in Munich in 1845 and had thereafter maintained the contact. The English liberal returned to Bavaria in 1874 after his term as prime minister had ended. His conversations with Döllinger, who had been excommunicated by the archbishop of Munich in 1870, influenced his philippics against ultramontanism in the famous anti-Vatican pamphlets he published in 1874/5.¹¹⁴ And there were, moreover, many social occasions that anticlerical elites could use for the exchange of information and opinions. During the Vatican Council, for example, the leading liberal families in the city organised salons, in which foreign envoys, journalists and artists took part.¹¹⁵

The direct impact of the transnational political initiatives generated by such networks and personal contacts was admittedly limited. But there is no doubt that they made it easier for anticlerical elites to acquire information on the evolution of culture wars in other European states and to assess and even transfer foreign 'models'.¹¹⁶ As Peter Stadler has shown for Switzerland, 'the model of Bismarck and of victorious Germany [lit the way] for many a Swiss would-be chancellor' and the Progressives 'would never have persisted with such iron determination' in 'their' culture war without the German leadership role.¹¹⁷ By the same token, young liberals in the Netherlands took their lead from the Berlin *Kulturkampf*, even though

¹¹² *L'Anticoncilio di Napoli del 1869. Promosso e descritto da Giuseppe Ricciardi* (Foggia, 1982 [Naples, 1870]), 16–20; see the appendix for a list of participants.

¹¹³ See also Mola, *Storia della massoneria italiana*, 135–8; Lalouette, *La libre pensée*, 38–9.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Matthew, *Gladstone*, 248; Matthew, 'Gladstone, Vaticanism', 423, Norman, *Anti-Catholicism*, 91.

¹¹⁵ Cf. Aubert, *Vaticanum I*, 191.

¹¹⁶ This applies to the role of the Baden *Kulturkampf* of the 1860s for the liberals in other German states; see Josef Becker, *Liberaler Staat und Kirche in der Ära von Reichsgründung und Kulturkampf. Geschichte und Strukturen ihres Verhältnisses in Baden 1860–1876* (Frankfurt am Main, 1973), 6.

¹¹⁷ Peter Stadler, 'Kulturkampf in der Schweiz – ein Sonderfall', in Lill and Traniello, *Der Kulturkampf*, 345–53, 351; see also Stadler, *Der Kulturkampf*, 373–4.

they later turned against Bismarck's anti-liberal policies.¹¹⁸ In Italy, too, during the 1870s, the idea of imitating the 'Prussian-German model' played an important role.¹¹⁹ From the 1880s, it was the culture war of the French republicans that set the pace for liberals, radicals and socialists in Italy¹²⁰ and Spain¹²¹ and inspired the anticlerical legislation passed in Portugal after the introduction of the republic there in 1910.¹²² In other words: although national rivalries and logistical problems militated against effective joint action by anticlericals, their political communication within a partially Europeanised public sphere nevertheless performed an important transfer function.

Central to the emergence of such a European public sphere was the elaboration of an anticlerical iconography that transcended national boundaries. Perhaps the most important anticlerical representative practice was the visual caricature widely disseminated in the satirical journals that flourished in Europe during the second half of the nineteenth century. New printing techniques developed during the 1860s, facilitating the mass reproduction of caricatures at an accessible price. By 1870, the leading German satirical journal *Kladderadatsch* boasted a circulation of some 50,000 copies, of which many were accessible in public and membership libraries.¹²³ It could be argued that political caricature was an elitist artform that could only effectively be deciphered by an educated middle-class audience. But this would be misleading: anticlerical iconography was just as familiar to irreligious peasants and workers as religious iconography was for faithful Catholics. Caricatures thus became a thoroughly popular medium of culture war, especially towards the end of the nineteenth century, when they were published by the increasingly important socialist newspapers. It can be assumed that visual satirists were influenced by work published in foreign newspapers – Stefano Pivato has certainly demonstrated this for socialist caricatures in Italy.¹²⁴ There is no doubt, in any case, that caricaturists operated within a European frame of reference and represented the supranational opponent in very consistent ways.

¹¹⁸ Te Velde, *Gemeenschapstijdschrift*, 37. Since ultramontanism was in any case less dominant in the Netherlands, the liberals were less prone to perceive papal policy as a threat. Cf. Pieter de Coninck, 'Een Les uit Pruisen. Nederland en de Kulturkampf, 1870–1880' (Ph.D. thesis, Rijksuniversiteit Leiden, 1998), 321, 324.

¹¹⁹ Verucci, 'Antiklerikalismus', 47–9. ¹²⁰ Ibid., 49.

¹²¹ See de la Cueva, 'The Stick and the Candle', 245. ¹²² Becker, 'Der Kulturkampf', 425.

¹²³ On technical innovations and for an overview of the satirical newspapers of the German Empire, see Friedhelm Jürgensmeier, *Die katholische Kirche im Spiegel der Karikatur der deutschen satirischen Tendenzzeitschriften von 1848 bis 1900* (Trier, 1969).

¹²⁴ Pivato, *Clericalismo*, 89. On Italian anticlerical caricatures, see Anna Maria Mojetta (ed.), *Cento anni di satira anticlericale. Nei giornali dal 1860 al 1955*, preface by Adolfo Chiesa (Milan, 1975).

Two Europe-wide motifs were especially prominent. The first was the doomed attempt by the pope to oppose the intellectual, economic and political forces of liberal modernity with the centralist and despotic programme of the *Syllabus errorum* and papal infallibility. Thus, the *Berliner Wespen* portrayed Pius IX vainly attempting to hold up the 'tide of the times' by using the *Syllabus* to plug a gushing spring of Enlightenment identified as such by the names Kant, Lessing, Goethe and Humboldt.¹²⁵ Numerous caricaturists also mocked the new dogma of papal infallibility by implying that it was the pope's intention to extend this principle to all spheres of life. Thus the Viennese *Kikeriki* depicted the pope as a customer at a lotto kiosk placing a bet on a specific number. The lotto official pleads with him: 'For God's sake, don't do it! You are infallible, so you will win every time and bust our lottery!'¹²⁶ In another caricature, the satirical figure *Kikeriki* declares himself infallible, implicitly casting doubt on the pope's right to claim such unique proximity to God.¹²⁷ The ultramontane bishops were always portrayed as the obedient auxiliaries of the Vatican, as in a caricature in the Parisian journal *Le Charivari* which depicted them with their crosiers raised like spears, drawn up in the formation of a Roman phalanx.¹²⁸ Many anticlerical images convey the assumption that pope and church would ultimately be damaged by the new dogma. Thus *La Rana*, a satirical journal published in Bologna, printed a cartoon in which Pius IX and Antonelli, having aimed a cannon marked 'infallibility' at a distant allegorical figure of 'progress', only succeed in making the weapon backfire.¹²⁹

In addition to the pope's arrogation of infallibility, a second central motif of many caricatures was the subservience of pope and bishops alike to the dark power of the Jesuits. *Le Charivari*, for example, showed a Jesuit inscribing the word 'infallibilité' as a portent on the wall.¹³⁰ *La Rana* portrayed the Council as 'Carnival in Rome'. Here, the pope is shown performing a 'final experiment' (infallibility), which transforms him into a clown. A Jesuit directs the entire performance. In the background, obedient bishops supply a musical accompaniment.¹³¹ The same motif can be discerned in an image from *Berliner Wespen*, which depicts the pope as a clumsy skater on a frozen lake. The pontiff is lured by a Jesuit towards an area of thin ice marked by

¹²⁵ 'Der Strom der Zeit', *Berliner Wespen*, 13 February 1870.

¹²⁶ 'In der Lotto-Kollektur', *Kikeriki*, 7 March 1870.

¹²⁷ 'Ich erkläre hiermit', *Kikeriki*, 27 December 1869.

¹²⁸ 'Le concile', *Le Charivari*, 11 April 1870.

¹²⁹ 'Un pezzo d'artiglieria poco sicuro', *La Rana*, 1 July 1870.

¹³⁰ 'Basile, mon ami', *Le Charivari*, 31 January 1870.

¹³¹ 'Le carnevale di Roma', *La Rana*, 25 February 1870.



Figure 3 Jesuit directing Pope Pius IX towards the thin ice of infallibility, from *Berliner Wespen*, 9 January 1870.

a warning sign.¹³² Drawing on a widespread allegorical association between Jesuits and reptiles, the *Kladderadatsch* portrayed a Jesuit-serpent who whispers to the pope that he should take and eat the 'apple of infallibility'.¹³³

Alongside the pope, two collective antagonists frequently recur in these anticlerical caricatures: the rural ultramontane clergy and the Jesuits. Across Europe, these two groups are handled in remarkably consistent fashion. Priests always appear as stolid and somewhat dim-witted individuals who grow plump at the cost of the faithful and lead a pleasant life. The Jesuits on the other hand are shown as wiry, treacherous figures, the partisans of a dangerous elite fighting force. While this uniformity in representation reflected shared traditions of anticlerical iconography, it was also facilitated by the increasingly standardised and distinctive character of clerical clothing as well as by certain signifying features, such as the headwear of the Jesuits. Priests and Jesuits appeared as twin complementary spearheads of ultramontanism. *Le Charivari* gives expression to this view through a caricature that shows a Jesuit sheltering under the *Syllabus errorum* while a Catholic priest takes cover under a Latin dictionary; the aim is clearly to symbolise

¹³² 'Auf dem Eise', *Berliner Wespen*, 9 January 1870.

¹³³ *Kladderadatsch*, 26 June 1870.

the clergy's manipulation of a rural population with no knowledge of Latin. The two embrace each other in an unholy ultramontane alliance against the modern world.¹³⁴

Within the repertoire of European anticlerical caricature, the anti-Jesuit topos is the equivalent of the antisemitic polemic of the ultramontanes. Even in places where there were scarcely any Jesuits, they were used as the metaphor for an extreme clericalism that was to be resisted at all costs. They appear as the chief protagonists of an obsolete, unenlightened and hierarchical order, in which individuals are intellectually manipulated and materially exploited in the interests of an oligarchic clique comprising the pope, the bishops, Catholic priests and the religious orders. The relationship between this old order and an anticlerical, secularised modernity is depicted again and again as a binary visual opposition between the darkness of 'Jesuitism' and the light of enlightenment and modern science. The anticlericals were perfectly aware that their opponents used similar modes of representation, albeit with the polarities reversed. There was even a degree of communication between these opposed imaginary worlds. The *Postheiri* from Solothurn, for example, offered an ironic reflection on ultramontane fears in the form of an extremely overdrawn image of a freemason as seen by papalist Catholics: the picture shows a heavily armed masonic, Helvetian robber captain who has just captured an innocent priest and is apparently about to eat him.¹³⁵

In addition to visual and literary media, there was also the highly politicised naming of streets. Here too there was a pan-European dimension. On the occasion of the inauguration of the Republic in 1873, the municipal government of Cadiz republicanised all 'Catholic' street names. In doing so they drew on the entire gallery of European anticlerical virtue, from Voltaire and Fourier to Garibaldi and Mazzini.¹³⁶ The same can be said of the wave of anticlerical monuments across Europe, which even in an era of national integration and conflicts did not confine themselves to the pantheon of 'national heroes' from Vercingetorix and Arminius onwards,¹³⁷ but also drew on a European martyrology featuring victims of the Inquisition from Jan Hus to Giordano Bruno and Galileo Galilei.¹³⁸

¹³⁴ 'A chose morte langue morte', *Le Charivari*, 2 February 1870.

¹³⁵ 'Getreues Conterfei eines veritablen Freimaurers', *Der Postheiri*, 5 February 1870.

¹³⁶ *El Pensamiento Español*, 5 April 1873, cited in Callahan, *Church, Politics and Society*, 265.

¹³⁷ For a treatment from a classically national perspective, see Pierre Nora (ed.), *Les lieux de mémoire* 3 vols. (Paris 1997 [1984, 1986, 1992]); the same approach is applied to Germany in Etienne François and Hagen Schulze (eds.), *Deutsche Erinnerungsorte*, 3 vols. (Munich, 2001).

¹³⁸ Cf. for French-speaking Europe, Lalouette, *La libre pensée*, 296.

Polarising events like the Vatican Council repeatedly reinvigorated the European dimension of anticlerical visual and material representations. Moreover, conflicts that began in a specific locality could trigger public discussions, protests and violence in other countries. An example is the Mortara affair of 1858, when the Vatican kidnapped a six-year-old Jewish boy from his family in the city of Bologna (at this time still under the temporal jurisdiction of the papacy), in order to have him educated as a Catholic after he had been baptised during an illness by a Catholic domestic servant.¹³⁹ The affair was widely reported in European newspapers, and gave rise to such heated debates over individual conscience, freedom of religion and the respective rights of family and church that governments even intervened with the pope in order to secure the rights of the aggrieved Jewish family.¹⁴⁰ Another notorious case that preoccupied the European public for twelve years was the 'Taxil hoax' of 1885/97.¹⁴¹ Posing as the former freemason 'Leo Taxil', Gabriel Jogand-Pages offered revelations of an alleged satanic cult within the masonic lodges, and the Catholic church organised an anti-masonic congress that took place in Trent in 1896. The cynical Jogand-Pages finally revealed his hoax in an address before the geographical society in Paris on Easter Sunday 1897.¹⁴²

Another example of an initially local event that quickly became a European cause célèbre was the execution of the Catalan anarchist pedagogue Francisco Ferrer, who was accused of personal responsibility for the violent anticlerical unrest of 1909 in Barcelona.¹⁴³ On 13 October 1909, the day of his execution, French anticlericals organised a mass demonstration in Paris.¹⁴⁴ The news that the execution had been carried out led to violent protests in the Italian Romagna. In Forlì, anticlericals organised a demonstration in which the socialist Benito Mussolini praised Ferrer for the personal sacrifice he had made in order to free mankind 'from all priestly and monarchical tyranny'.¹⁴⁵ The impact of Ferrer's execution shows how established such declarations of solidarity had become among anticlericals by the beginning of the twentieth century. It also exemplifies the cross-border transfer of ritual regimes: here, for the first time, Italian anticlericals set fire to church doors, an act of symbolic violence borrowed directly from the Spanish anticlerical tradition.

¹³⁹ See David I. Kertzer, *The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara* (New York, 1997); Daniele Scalise, *Il caso Mortara: la vera storia del bambino ebreo rapito del papa* (Milan, 1997).

¹⁴⁰ Rémond, *L'anti-cléricalisme*, 156.

¹⁴¹ Cf. Eugen Weber, *Satan franc-maçon: la mystification de Léo Taxil* (Paris, 1964).

¹⁴² See also Binder, *Die diskrete Gesellschaft*, 67; Papenheim, 'Zirkel, Winkelmaß und Trikolore'.

¹⁴³ Jordi de Cambra Bassols, *Anarquismo y positivismo: el caso Ferrer* (Madrid, 1981).

¹⁴⁴ Lalouette, *La libre pensée*, 299. ¹⁴⁵ Cited in Lyttelton, 'An Old Church', 235.

CONCLUSIONS

The history of Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century has for too long been viewed retrospectively, from the vantage point of the outbreak of war in 1914. From this perspective, Europe appears as a political space distinguished by rapid economic development and major social and national conflicts that were ultimately resolved through violence. But the conflict over the role of religion and church in a modern polity was a veritable 'clash of civilisations'¹⁴⁶ *within* European society. It had a cultural and political life of its own which cannot simply be subsumed under other factors. The anticlericalism of the European liberals did not simply serve purposes of national integration from above at the expense of the supra-national Catholic church, as is often implied in accounts written from a Catholic perspective. It was more than a mere tactical device to conceal socio-economic conflicts and divert emancipatory social and political demands, as later socialist-inspired interpretations would suggest. Finally, the anticlericalism of the political left was not the hallmark of an underdeveloped class consciousness, as a (neo-)Marxist analysis would infer. The secularising or anticlerical legislation of republican elites was of course *one* element in the European culture war. But European anticlericalism was based upon an autonomous and cohesive belief system that had deep social roots extending far beyond the confines of a liberally inclined bourgeois elite. It was not always steered by the state. Nor was it *primarily* concerned – in a pan-European perspective – with the deployment of instruments of state pressure. On the contrary, anticlericalism was often spontaneously and locally organised, and it expressed itself in varying social and regional patterns of cultural representation and, intermittently, of physical violence.

The gradual radicalisation, both of anticlerical state measures and of social action can be explained above all in terms of a belief system based upon a binary vision with a clear friend–foe schema: on one side, the enlightened defenders of economic and cultural progress and of the 'modern world' – on the other, the exponents of an obsolete, retrograde oligarchic order, in which a small clerical elite instrumentalised sheep-like believers, especially women, for their own malign purposes. In this scenery of light and darkness, there were no grey zones. In such a fundamental conflict, there was no choice but to take sides. Even in those states where political practice was mitigated by parliamentary cooperation, or by local networks

¹⁴⁶ There is thus an urgent need to correct Samuel Huntington's thesis with a historically grounded analysis of analogous conflicts *within* civilisations, rather than between them. Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York, 1996).

of compromise and moderation, political rhetoric was not. Rhetorical radicalisation played an important role in delegitimising a politics of moderate reform. This was an important legacy of the culture wars for Europe in the inter-war period, when moderate protagonists on both sides found that they lacked a sufficiently stable basis for a combined struggle against the extremist ideologies of the twentieth century.

Lastly, the culture wars should not be conceptualised as a societal conflict within newly emergent or increasingly assertive nation-states. Those who would concern themselves with culture war should not adopt the contemporary assumptions of nationalist propagandists (including many historians). The culture wars were always *also* a pan-European conflict. The thickening web of communication within a partially Europeanised public sphere permitted the intensive exchange and adaptation of 'foreign' models and, less often, concerted transnational political action. The culture wars were also a conflict of the two Europes.

CHAPTER 3

'Priest hits girl': on the front line in the 'war of the two Frances'

James McMillan

INTRODUCTION

'Clericalism? That's the enemy!'¹ Gambetta's battle cry, hurled in a celebrated speech to the Chamber of Deputies on 4 May 1877, has rightly come to be seen as the declaration of war which heralded the onset of the French *Kulturkampf*, a struggle between the Third Republic and the Catholic church which lasted between 1879 and 1905 and was characterised by the enactment of two major programmes of anticlerical legislation, one between 1879 and the mid-1880s, the other at the turn of the century, the culmination of which was the complete separation of church and state in 1905. The legislative culture war has been studied many times, and will not be re-examined in this chapter.² The focus here, rather, is on the culture war on the ground, in order to demonstrate that the culture war was fought not just between a bourgeois intelligentsia (republican and Catholic) in the forum of parliament and the national press but also involved ordinary people, both villagers and priests, in obscure corners of provincial France. The chapter seeks to show further that the late nineteenth-century conflict was only a particular phase – albeit the most decisive one – in a much longer-running *guerre des deux Frances*, or 'war of the two Frances'. The French culture war was in many respects a kind of 'cold' war which periodically irrupted into 'hot' war, as in the Breton *guerre scolaire* ('battle of the schools'), which provides our case study.

The battle of the schools was triggered by the 'laic laws', the anticlerical measures devised principally by Jules Ferry, one of the new breed of republican politicians who had emerged at the end of the Second Empire and

¹ Extracts from the speech are conveniently reproduced in R. Rémond, *L'anticléricalisme en France de 1815 à nos jours* (Paris, 1976), 184–5.

² Especially valuable is E. M. Acomb, *The French Laic Laws, 1879–1889* (New York, 1941). For a general survey, see J. McManners, *Church and State in France, 1870–1914* (London, 1972). On the Separation, M. Larkin, *Church and State after the Dreyfus Affair: The Separation Issue in France* (London, 1974); J.-M. Mayeur, *La séparation des églises et de l'état* (Paris, 1966).

who was, like many others, a positivist and a freemason.³ Ferry's first target in 1879 was the Jesuit order, whose secondary schools he closed down.⁴ Another priority (highly relevant to our case study) was female education. By establishing a network of training colleges to train high-quality female primary teachers and by developing state schools for girls at the secondary level, Ferry and his collaborators, Paul Bert and Camille Sée, intended to break the virtual monopoly over the whole of girls' education held by the female religious orders.⁵ Other laws banned Catholic universities and provided for the removal of the clergy from various local and central educational authorities. At the core of the 'laic laws' of 1879–86, however, was the drive to put in place a state system of free and compulsory elementary education, from which the teaching of religion was prohibited. God was banished from the classrooms and a further law of 1886 banned members of the religious orders from holding posts in state schools.⁶

The fundamental issue at stake in this conflict of cultures was the place of religion in public life. For Gambetta, Ferry and the rest of the new republican leadership, religion was essentially a private matter, a question of personal choice: the church had no role to play in the public sphere, nor should it be the privileged arbiter of moral standards. Republicans employed the term 'clericalism' to signify and object to perceived attempts on the part of the Catholic clergy to exert illegitimate influence over both national life and private morality. Their own ideals were encompassed in the *idée laïque*, an untranslatable term which implied a commitment on the part of the republican state to the creation of a secular state and a secular society.⁷ Catholics, on the other hand, taking their cue from Rome, refused to accept that in France, 'the eldest daughter of the Church', Catholicism should be relegated to the margins of French life. They continued to argue,

³ On Ferry, see P. Chevallier, *La séparation de l'église et de l'école, Jules Ferry et Léon XIII* (Paris, 1981) and F. Furet (ed.), *Jules Ferry fondateur de la République* (Paris, 1985).

⁴ On anti-Jesuitism, G. Cubitt, *The Jesuit Myth: Conspiracy Theory and Politics in Nineteenth-Century France* (Oxford, 1993).

⁵ On girls' schools, the works of Françoise Mayeur, *L'éducation des filles au dix-neuvième siècle* (Paris, 1979) and *L'enseignement secondaire des jeunes filles sous la Troisième République* (Paris, 1977). Also J. F. McMillan, *France and Women 1789–1914: Gender, Society and Politics* (London, 2000), 144–8 and S. Gemie, *Women and Schooling in France. 1815–1914: Gender, Authority and Identity in the Female Schooling Sector* (Keele, 1995).

⁶ On the 'school laws', in addition to Acomb, see M. Ozouf, *L'école, l'église et la République, 1871–1914* (Paris, 1963).

⁷ *Laïcité* has been the subject of a huge literature. A good introduction is J.-M. Mayeur, *La question laïque, xixe–xxe siècle* (Paris, 1997). Still essential is G. Weill, *Histoire de l'idée laïque en France au xixe siècle* (Paris, 1929; 1st edn 1925). See also the works of Emile Poulat, especially his *Liberté, laïcité: la guerre des deux Frances et le principe de la modernité* (Paris, 1987) and J. Bauberot, *La morale laïque contre l'ordre moral* (Paris, 1997).

therefore, for the maintenance of the historic links between the Catholic church and the French nation.

In republican historiography and mythology, the culture war of the period 1879–1905 has most frequently been represented as the climax of a protracted struggle against the church which began under the Revolution and continued more or less unabated over the course of the nineteenth century. It was the final showdown between the bearers of a revolutionary tradition which embraced a modern, secular view of the world and the heirs of the *ancien régime* who remained wedded to the outmoded idea of an alliance between throne and altar.⁸ Writing in 1872, the prominent republican intellectual Charles Renouvier claimed: ‘There are two Frances in France, that of the clericals and that of the liberals . . . there are no longer virtually any ideas or sentiments in common between the two groups, between these two peoples obliged nonetheless to live under the same civil law’.⁹ Catholic propagandists agreed. In the aftermath of the Separation, the monk Dom Besse likewise invoked the idea of a *guerre des deux Frances*, which opposed ‘royalist and Catholic France, and revolutionary and atheist France’. These two Frances, he affirmed, hated one another with a passion, which was ‘in the nature of things’. Moreover, in the monk’s view, the great mass of citizens who floated somewhere in between did not count, since in the end they would finish up in the camp of the winning side in the struggle.¹⁰

Such black-and-white representations of the *fin-de-siècle* culture war in France are doubtless flawed, as Georges Weill recognised long ago. There was always a centre ground which included both republican Catholics, who accepted that the Revolution had forever ended the confessional state, and secular liberals and republicans who had a genuine respect for the religious impulse and the achievements of Christian civilisation.¹¹ In a recent and important revisionist work on the making of the French republican tradition, Sudhir Hazareesingh has emphasised the sheer range and diversity of opinion within the republican camp on many issues, and not least religion. It is mistaken, he suggests, to think of republicans and Catholics as being engaged in an ongoing and polarised war of religion over the course of the nineteenth century. In his view, anticlericalism ‘was simply one of the possible configurations of [their] relationship’. The alleged polarisation, he argues, ‘was a later – ideological – invention of the republicans themselves

⁸ Representative is A. Debidour, *L’église catholique et l’état sous la Troisième République 1870–1906*, 2 vols., (Paris, 1906).

⁹ C. Renouvier, in *Critique philosophique*, I, 279, cited by Weill, *Histoire de l’idée laïque*, 229.

¹⁰ Dom Besse, *Veillons sur notre histoire* (Paris, 1907), 10, 12, cited in *ibid.*, 359.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 359–61.

and of a French historiographical tradition which sought to play down the influence of spiritual and deist undercurrents within the republican movement'.¹²

Hazareesingh is right to contest any teleological approach to the French culture war of the late nineteenth century which collapses the necessary distinctions to be made between the republicanism of the early Third Republic and the republicanism of the 1790s. Yet, as he himself insists, 1789 haunted the imagination of nineteenth-century republicans, above all as a political myth firing them with a zeal to complete unfinished business left over from the Revolution. Also, ideological conflicts centred on memory and attitudes to the Revolution account for much that was distinctive about French politics in the nineteenth century at both the national and local levels.¹³ The prospects for a reconciliation between Catholics and republicans were bleak even in the 1840s, when the likes of Michelet and Quinet, two canonical republican thinkers, were already alarmed by the threat to public and private life supposedly posed by the Society of Jesus.¹⁴

The argument presented here is that the culture war announced by Gambetta in 1877 and taken forward by Ferry, René Waldeck-Rousseau and Emile Combes should indeed be understood as a particular phase of the broader and longer *guerre des deux Frances* that both preceded and outlasted it. The 'war of the two Frances' is a concept which retains a good deal of validity, albeit with the need for nuances which are lacking in the definitions offered by contemporary polemicists like Renouvier and Dom Besse.¹⁵ A protracted ideological war did take place, conducted at two levels. At the national level, there was an unrelenting war of words and symbols between the militant adepts of secular and religious visions of the world. This ideological war was essentially a quarrel among intellectuals – intransigent, ultramontane *catholiques avant tout* on the one side and militant apologists for the *idée laïque* on the other – but it cannot be airily dismissed as a conflict which engaged only the French chattering classes.

For the *guerre des deux Frances* operated in another, local dimension, which centred on the role of the priest in the local community: what

¹² S. Hazareesingh, *Intellectual Founders of the Republic: Five Studies in Nineteenth-Century French Political Thought* (Oxford, 2001), 286.

¹³ The essential work of reference is P. Nora, *Les lieux de mémoire*, 7 vols. (Paris, 1984–92). See also R. Gildea, *The Past in French History* (New Haven and London, 1994) and A. Ben-Amos, *Funerals, Politics and Memory in Modern France 1789–1996* (Oxford, 2000).

¹⁴ Cubitt, *Jesuit Myth*, 111ff.

¹⁵ For instance, Poulat, *Liberté, laïcité* and E. Poulat, *Eglise contre bourgeoisie. Introduction au devenir du catholicisme actuel* (Paris, 1977).

was to be the extent of his power and influence? In the first half of the nineteenth century this question may have had few resonances outside of the village, but after 1848, in the context of the shift towards mass politics and the coming of manhood suffrage, it was pregnant with significance, carrying major implications for the future of national politics in a democratic society, as both sides well understood. In the 1860s and the 1870s, the ideological war served to politicise local conflicts and that politicisation in turn created the possibility for the creation of a mass republican movement held together by the cement of anticlericalism.¹⁶ In this way, the conflation of the local and national aspects of the *guerre des deux Frances* prepared the ground for the new, political stage of the conflict in the *fin de siècle*, which once again brought the republican state into confrontation with Catholics.

ORIGINS AND FAULTLINES

The role of the Revolution in bequeathing a legacy of division to nineteenth-century France over the matter of religion can scarcely be exaggerated.¹⁷ Old regime France had been a confessional state in which the clergy had been ranked as the first estate of the realm, and the interconnections between religion and society had been numerous. All that changed with the Revolution, especially between 1792 and 1794 when the First French Republic attempted to extirpate organised Christianity by mobilising the resources of the state against it and seeking to replace it with a culture whose essential references were rooted in the Revolution itself. Some 2,000–3,000 priests perished under the Revolution, or roughly 2 per cent of all those ordained. The vast majority – around 32,500 – were forced to emigrate into lonely and penurious exile. Altogether, the Revolution was responsible for an unprecedented persecution and spoliation of the church, along with the destruction of much of its patrimony.¹⁸ The Concordat of 1801 between Napoleon and the papacy brought religious pacification but came nowhere

¹⁶ The key work is P. Boutry, *Prêtres et paroisses au pays du curé d'Ars* (Paris, 1986). See additionally J. F. McMillan, 'Religion and Politics in Nineteenth-Century France: Further Reflections on Why Catholics and Republicans Couldn't Stand Each Other', in A. Ivereigh (ed.), *The Politics of Religion in an Age of Revival: Studies in Nineteenth-Century Europe and Latin America* (London, 2001), 43–55.

¹⁷ This is not to deny that the church of the *ancien régime* already faced the kinds of longer-term difficulties identified by M. Vovelle, *Piété baroque et déchristianisation en Provence au xviii^e siècle* (Paris, 1973), and J. Quéniart, *Culture et société dans la France de l'Ouest au xviii^e siècle* (Paris, 1978).

¹⁸ The literature on the French Revolution and the church is vast. An excellent survey is N. Aston, *Religion and Revolution in France 1780–1804* (London, 2000), with an up-to-date bibliography.

near to restoring the French church to the privileged position which it had occupied under the old order.¹⁹

In the fall-out from the revolutionary rupture, the faultlines were clear enough to nineteenth-century contemporaries who identified with the revolutionary idea of the secular nation-state and others who opposed it in the name of religion and a Christian and traditional conception of the social order. On one side liberals, democrats and republicans embraced the new politics invented by the Revolution and drew inspiration from the idea of popular sovereignty. However much they quarrelled among themselves about what this concept implied in practical constitutional terms, apologists for the revolutionary tradition agreed that authority derived not from 'above' – from God – but from 'below' – from 'the people'. The nation-state had to embody the popular will. Liberals and democrats saw themselves as representatives of a 'modern world' in which the church had no claim to any special favours or any link with political society, as under the *ancien régime*. On the other side of the faultline, distinct from, though often allied with, conservatives who continued to uphold the traditions of the monarchy, militant Catholics remembered the Revolution as a catastrophe, a rupture with God, Christ and his church, and a repudiation of the Christian belief in the interaction between God and man on the basis of divine law. Far from looking for the completion of the revolutionary project, most spokesmen for Catholic opinion wanted nothing less than the restoration of a recognisably Christian social order.

The intensity of the ideological war which developed over the course of the nineteenth century, and more especially in its middle decades, owed much, though not all, to the 'New Catholicism' of Pius IX and Louis Veuillot.²⁰ Crucially, *L'Univers* was the favourite reading material of the rank-and-file clergy throughout the land, if not always of their ecclesiastical superiors. Veuillot's newspaper told them what they wanted to hear: that, despite everything that had happened since 1789, there were still Frenchmen who considered themselves to be *catholiques avant tout* – Catholics before all else – who would never be reconciled to a 'modern world' which denied

¹⁹ On the Concordat, see W. Roberts, 'Napoleon, the Concordat of 1801 and its Consequences', in F. J. Coppa (ed.), *Controversial Concordats. The Vatican's Relations with Napoleon, Mussolini and Hitler* (Washington, 1999). Still valuable is E. E. Y. Hales, *Napoleon and the Pope: The Story of Napoleon and Pius VII* (London, 1962).

²⁰ On the 'New Catholicism' generally, see especially C. M. Clark's analysis in chapter 1. A neglected theme has been covered recently by M. Sacquin, *L'antiprottestantisme en France de 1814 à 1870* (Paris, 1998). The most recent study of Veuillot is P. Pierrard, *Louis Veuillot* (Paris, 1998). See also B. Le Roux, *Louis Veuillot: un homme, un combat* (Paris, 1984) and M. L. Brown, *Louis Veuillot: French Ultramontane Journalist and Layman, 1813–1883* (Durham, N.C., 1977).

God and the church their rightful place at the centre of social organisation.²¹ Veuillot's message was simple: France was a Christian country by tradition, and it ought therefore to function as a Christian polity.²²

In France, as elsewhere, a feature of the New Catholicism was the growing popularity of certain forms of piety which were unashamedly sentimental, emotional and anti-intellectual, bringing the official church closer to what rational minds regarded as the 'superstitions' of popular religion, as for example in pilgrimages, recourse to healers and traditional medicine, or in the veneration of holy wells, relics and local saints. Ultramontanes strongly promoted belief in miracles: Veuillot himself played a leading role in popularising Lourdes, the shrine in the Pyrenees where the Virgin appeared to the peasant girl Bernadette Soubirous in 1858.²³ Indeed, to the delight of French ultramontanes, France seemed to be singularly favoured by Marian apparitions. Prior to Lourdes, Mary was sighted in 1830 by Catherine Labouré, a Paris nun, in a vision which gave rise to the cult of the 'miraculous medal', credited with the power to protect its wearers against illness, notably during the cholera epidemic of 1832. In 1846 the Virgin again manifested herself at La Salette in the Alps, this time to a shepherd boy and girl. Later, in the midst of the Franco-Prussian War in 1870, she appeared to a group of young children at Pontmain in Brittany to reassure them that their village would be spared from the ravages of invasion. For ultramontanes, it was no accident that all the Marian visionaries came from humble backgrounds and were usually children or women – the perfect reminder to proud, rationalist, male intellectuals that they had no monopoly on truth or wisdom.²⁴

The cult of the Sacred Heart was another devotion dear to ultramontane Catholics. Centred on the visions and raptures of the Visitandine nun Marguerite-Marie Alacoque at the convent of Paray-le-Monial, it had been promoted by Jesuit missionaries in the seventeenth century and had subsequently acquired a strong following in the 1790s among the counter-revolutionaries of the Vendée, who placed their fight to defend both the monarchy and their traditional Catholic faith under the banner of the Sacred Heart. In the nineteenth century, the ultramontane party adopted the cult as the symbol of a Catholic vision of the

²¹ L. Veuillot, 'A nos lecteurs', *L'Univers*, 4 December 1842. Also Y. Tranvouez, *Catholiques d'abord. Approches du mouvement catholique en France, 19e–20e siècle* (Paris, 1988).

²² L. Veuillot, 'Les deux nations', *L'Univers*, 28 February 1843.

²³ R. Harris, *Lourdes: Body and Spirit in a Secular Age* (London, 1999), 123ff.

²⁴ On Marian apparitions generally, see the overview in D. Blackburn, *Marpingen. Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Bismarckian Germany* (Oxford, 1992), ch. 1. Also essential is T. Kselman, *Miracles and Prophecies in Nineteenth-Century France* (New Brunswick, 1983).

nation and agitated successfully for the construction of the celebrated neo-Byzantine basilica which now occupies such a distinctive place on the Paris skyline.²⁵

Though claiming to be Catholics first and last, the *Veuillotistes* in fact hankered after a return to Christian monarchy. As Veuillot asked rhetorically: 'Who would not prefer to live under the absolute sceptre of Saint Louis than under the fraternal musket of the democrats of Rome, Berne, Vienna, or Paris?'²⁶ Though he distrusted the Legitimist Party, the catastrophic events of 1870–1 – the French defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, the papacy's loss of Rome, the experience of the Paris Commune – convinced him of the pressing need for 'a return of God to France' in the person of the Legitimist pretender, the comte de Chambord.²⁷

Understandably, the Catholic push to rechristianise French society 'from above' thoroughly alarmed French liberals and republicans and provided them with ammunition for an offensive against 'clericalism'. They, however, had long been elaborating a position of their own which was by no means exclusively reactive. Their own commitment was to the *idée laïque*, a conception of the polity which repudiated any suggestion of a return to the confessional state and affirmed the supremacy of reason over dogma. For a militant avant-garde, at least, the war of the two Frances was a necessary and unavoidable struggle in order to realise their personal faith in the progress of humanity.

The most radical exponents of the *idée laïque* were the atheist free-thinkers who militated in the free-thought societies which began to take off around mid-century. Many were disciples of Proudhon, and like their master declared war on God as well as on the church to signal their belief that religion enslaved the individual. Their ideas spoke to a fairly widespread (if overwhelmingly male) popular audience and were particularly well received in certain sectors of the agricultural community (notably among the wine-growers) and by industrial workers in the building and engineering trades. Café proprietors were often another group among whom radical free thought flourished, while the violence of the anticlerical outbursts which accompanied the Paris Commune of 1871 attests to the deep-seated anti-Catholicism of Parisian artisans, who numbered among Proudhon's most faithful disciples.²⁸

²⁵ R. Jonas, *France and the Cult of the Sacred Heart: An Epic Tale for Modern Times* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 2000).

²⁶ L. Veuillot, 'Le christianisme et la démocratie', *L'Univers*, 8 November 1848.

²⁷ L. Veuillot, 'L'avenir est à la démocratie', *L'Univers*, 17 January 1872.

²⁸ J. Lalouette, *La libre pensée en France 1848–1940* (Paris, 1997).

To express their contempt for formal religion, some societies took to holding banquets on Good Friday – the most solemn day in the church's liturgical year, marked by fasting and abstinence on the part of the faithful. The banquet ritual seems to have been initiated by the anticlerical literary critic and senator Sainte-Beuve, who, much to the indignation of Veuillot and *L'Univers*, staged a meal on 10 April 1868 for friends who included Flaubert, Renan, Taine, Prince Napoleon and the prominent journalist Edmond About. In 1869 and 1870 a number of free-thought societies with socialist links to the First International followed suit in some of the larger cities of France, and after a lapse of some years in the aftermath of the Commune the practice became widespread, even in smaller towns and even the odd village. Mostly these were small-scale affairs, but in Paris as many as a thousand people sometimes sat down to a meal in a large restaurant specially booked for the occasion. Militants (though much less frequently their wives and children) stuffed themselves with meat and drink while enjoying blasphemous speeches, toasts and jokes in surroundings decorated with busts of Marianne, the symbol of the Republic, to underscore the political significance of the occasion. Rousing renditions of the *Marseillaise* and other revolutionary songs likewise contributed to the political symbolism as well as providing congenial entertainment.²⁹

Atheist free-thinkers, of course, were a minority of a minority. Many free-thought societies long remained loyal to the deist beliefs of the eighteenth century. In free-thought circles of the 1870s Voltaire rather than Rousseau was the *philosophe* of preference, celebrated by neo-Voltairians such as Auguste Vacquerie and Edouard Lockroy of *Le Rappel*, and Edmond About and Francisque Sarcey of *Le Dix-Neuvième Siècle*, who, in the mocking tradition of their master, lost no opportunity to scoff at the doctrines and dogmas of the church. As the centenary year of Voltaire's death approached in 1878 left-wingers on the municipal council of Paris took the lead in organising commemorative celebrations, deliberately highlighting Voltaire's role as a pioneer of anticlericalism rather than his place in the history of French literature. There was much less enthusiasm among free-thinkers for the natural religion expounded by Rousseau's fictitious Savoyard vicar, though the extreme left of the late 1870s was prepared to remember Rousseau for his political radicalism.³⁰

²⁹ This paragraph is based on J. Lalouette, 'Les banquets du "vendredi dit Saint"', in A. Corbin, N. G  r  me and D. Tartakowsky (eds.), *Les usages politiques des f  tes au XIX  -XX   si  cle* (Paris, 1994), 223–6.

³⁰ J.-M. Goulemot and E. Walter, 'Les centennaires de Voltaire et Rousseau', in P. Nora (ed.), *Les lieux de m  moire* (Quarto edn Paris, 1997), 351–82.

Most other exponents of the *idée laïque*, while hostile to Rome, were not enemies of religion as such. Victor Cousin, the predominant influence in the *Université* in the 1830s and 1840s, was a deist, as was his disciple, the philosopher and republican politician Jules Simon.³¹ Liberal Protestants who, from the days of Benjamin Constant under the Restoration gave a lead in calling for the separation of church and state, were committed to elaborating a progressive form of Christianity.³² The world of freemasonry – another important channel for the diffusion of the *idée laïque* – officially adhered to deism until 1877, when the Grand Orient deleted references to the ‘Grand Architect of the Universe’ from its constitution.³³ In the provincial lodges, indeed, one can still find examples of Catholic masons in the 1860s, despite strong denunciations of masonry on the part of Rome and the bishops.³⁴ Among republican thinkers, as Hazareesingh has pointed out, even Littré was never the atheist that his enemies made him out to be and was a deathbed convert to Catholicism in 1881. Similarly Etienne Vacherot, a noted free-thinker in the 1850s and 1860s, came to regret the rise of atheistic forms of anticlericalism in his old age and returned to both Catholicism and monarchism. He too received a religious burial on his death in 1897.³⁵

The fact remains, however, that, by 1870, in the eyes of many republicans, the time for compromises was long past. Whatever their personal religious beliefs, in the 1860s virtually all republicans understood the religious question as primarily a *political*, rather than an ideological, issue. As the Roman question came to dominate the domestic political agenda, the anticlerical press waged an implacable war against the Catholic church and its clergy. Organs like *L’Avenir National*, directed by Gambetta’s friend Peyrat (the man who, indeed, furnished the great tribune with the phrase ‘Le cléricalisme? Voilà l’ennemi’), increasingly demanded the separation of church and state. The more moderate *Le Temps*, under the influence of liberal Protestants like Auguste Nefftzer and Edmond Scherer, was theoretically in favour of separation, though it had doubts about its timing. In *L’Opinion Nationale*, the mouthpiece of Prince Napoleon’s left-wing

³¹ On Cousin and his school, J. Brookes III, *The Eclectic Legacy: Academic Philosophy and the Human Sciences in Nineteenth-Century France* (Newark, 1998) as well as V. Cousin, *Oeuvres de Victor Cousin. Discours politiques* (Paris, 1851). On Simon, P. Bertocci, *Jules Simon: Republican Anticlericalism and Cultural Politics in France 1848–1866* (Columbia, Mo., 1978).

³² Weill, *Histoire de l’idée laïque*, 7.

³³ On freemasonry, M. Larkin, *Religion, Politics and Preferment in France since the 1890s: La Belle Epoque and its Legacy* (Cambridge, 1995), 119–27.

³⁴ S. Hazareesingh and V. Wright, *Francs-maçons sous le Second Empire: Les loges provinciales du Grand-Orient à la veille de la Troisième République* (Rennes, 2001).

³⁵ Hazareesingh, *Intellectual Founders*, 73–6, 164–5.

Bonapartism, a republican collaborator like Léon Richer (now remembered largely as that rare bird, a male pioneer of liberal feminism) argued that the time had come to make a choice between the church and 'the modern world' in order to remake national unity.³⁶ Republicans and Catholics had come to the river.

THE ROAD TO 1879

It should be stressed that 1879 was a very real turning-point in the attitude of government towards the church. For the first time since the French Revolution the state deemed the Catholic religion no longer indispensable to the inculcation of morality and set about building a modern nation in conformity with its own democratic values. Even so, the moderate politicians who ran the Third Republic for twenty years between 1879 and 1899 refused to bow to radical demands for a complete separation of church and state and preferred to keep the Concordat in place. Church leaders, too, desperately wanted to maintain the formal legal framework established in 1801, and in the early 1890s the possibilities for rapprochement seemed brighter when Pope Leo XIII, in his policy of *ralliement*, called on French Catholics to rally to the Republic.³⁷

This reluctance of both churchmen and republicans to engage in all-out warfare was rooted in the climate of political uncertainty that was the key feature of French political life in the nineteenth century. The absence of consensus on the form of the polity served as a constant reminder of the omnipresent threat of revolution and its potentially disastrous consequences. France underwent nine changes of regime between 1799 and 1870, and even after the advent of the Third Republic the new political establishment lived in a state of constant anxiety about the viability of their creation. In this context of permanent political instability, both religious and political leaders long strove to maintain religious peace.

Thus, the vast majority of the French bishops were realists who eschewed any outmoded concept of an alliance between throne and altar, certainly after the failure of the Restoration in 1830. Hardliners like Clausel de Montals, bishop of Chartres, under the July Monarchy, and the intransigent Mgr Pie, bishop of Poitiers, under the Second Empire, were very

³⁶ Weill, *Histoire de l'idée laïque*, 179ff. On Richer, P. K. Bidelman, *Pariahs Stand Up! The Founding of the Liberal Feminist Movement in France 1859-1889* (Westport, Conn. and London, 1982).

³⁷ On the *ralliement*, A. Sedgwick, *The Ralliement in French Politics 1890-1898* (Cambridge, Mass, 1965) and X. de Montclos, *Lavigerie, le Saint-Siège et l'Eglise* (Paris, 1965). On the Concordat, M. Larkin, 'The Church and the French Concordat, 1891-1902', *English Historical Review* 81 (1966), 717-39.

much the exceptions. Between the 1840s and 1860s the character of the episcopate changed dramatically. No longer was it staffed largely by the sons of noble families like the Cardinal Duke de Rohan, bishop of Besançon, but increasingly by appointees from a middle-class background and even by some (like Dupanloup, Gousset and Bouvier) of more humble origins. Such men owed their promotions to merit, and above all to their possession of superior administrative skills. In effect, they were the religious counterparts of the prefectural corps, which at precisely the same time as the episcopate was becoming a more professional and essentially depoliticised body.³⁸

Whatever their private political sympathies, few bishops openly challenged the established political order and readily acknowledged the precedence in law of the state. Prelates like Mgr de Ségur might be prominent in the Catholic campaign against freemasonry, while the hyperactive Dupanloup was an inveterate champion of Catholic education, ready to do battle with Napoleon III's progressive minister of education, Victor Duruy in the late 1860s, but generally speaking it was not the bishops who took the lead in offering resistance to the France which emerged out of the revolutionary tradition in the name of a second, Catholic, France.³⁹ Rather, as our case study will show, it was the parish clergy who furnished the front-line troops in the culture war on the ground (though, in the particular episode of the *guerre scolaire*, in Brittany there was some episcopal direction in the background).

On the government side, successive polities – the Restoration, the July Monarchy, the Second Republic, the Second Empire and the 'moral order' regime of the early Third Republic in the 1870s – recognised in the church a bulwark against revolution and disorder and continued to entrust it with the mission of moralising the masses, notably through its schools. This was particularly the case in the aftermath of the June Days of 1848, when the 'party of order', which included a pillar of the July Monarchy like the liberal and Voltairian sceptic Adolphe Thiers, readily made concessions to the church in an effort to combat the 'red menace'. Fearing the spreading of democratic and socialist ideas to the countryside by radical

³⁸ A. R. May, 'Is "Les Deux Frances" a Valid Framework for Interpreting the Nineteenth-Century Church? The French Episcopate as a Case Study', *Catholic Historical Review* 73 (1987), 541–61. The essential work on the French bishops is now J.-O. Boudon, *L'épiscopat français à l'époque concordataire, 1802–1905: origines, formation, nomination* (Paris, 1996). On the truculent Mgr Pie, A. Gough, 'The Conflict in Politics. Bishop Pie's Campaign against the Nineteenth Century', in T. Zeldin (ed.), *Conflicts in French Society: Anticlericalism, Education and Moralism in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1970), 94–168.

³⁹ J. Gadille, *La pensée et l'action politique des évêques français au début de la Troisième République, 1870–1883*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1967). For Mgr de Ségur and freemasonry, E. Poulat and J.-P. Laurant (eds.), *L'antimaçonnisme catholique. Les Franc-Maçons de Mgr de Ségur* (Paris, 1994).

schoolmasters, these conservatives enacted the Falloux Law of 15 March 1850 to support the expansion of primary schools run by religious orders. The same law conceded the right of the church to open private schools at the secondary level in the name of the principle of 'freedom of education' – the right denied to the nascent *parti catholique* by the July Monarchy in the 1840s.⁴⁰

All the while, however, the culture war continued to be waged on the ground. The 'war of the two Frances' could not always be controlled from above, and at grass-roots level intransigence was often more in evidence than a willingness to compromise, certainly from the 1860s, if not before. Nineteenth-century France was an overwhelmingly rural society. Under the Restoration, 75 per cent of a population of thirty million lived and worked in the countryside, while in 1911, 56 per cent of the population of now almost forty million was still classified as rural. In each village, the priest was acknowledged to be a key figure in village life and throughout the century he was always at the sharp end of the 'war of the two Frances'.⁴¹

Confrontations between priests and villagers were endemic in rural society, irrespective of the attitude of government.⁴² The ideal of *le bon curé*, living in peace and harmony with his flock, was extremely difficult to realise in practice. Disgruntled villagers, either individually or more commonly from the 1840s in conjunction with either the local schoolmaster or mayor, or both, bombarded the Ministère des Cultes with complaints about abuses of clerical authority which the prefect would be delegated to investigate. Public refusal of the sacraments (especially to members of better-off families) could give deep offence. So too could preventing children from making their first communion at the normal time. A misjudged remark on the part

⁴⁰ On the impact of the Falloux Law, R. D. Anderson, 'The Conflict in Education. Catholic Secondary Schools (1850–1870): a Reappraisal', in Zeldin (ed.), *Conflicts in French Society*, 51–93, and R. Gildea, *Education in Provincial France, 1800–1914: A Study of Three Departments* (Oxford, 1983). On education more generally, F. Mayeur, *Histoire générale de l'enseignement et de l'éducation en France*, vol. III: *De la Révolution à l'école républicaine* (Paris, 1981) and R. Anderson, *Education in France, 1848–1870* (Oxford, 1975).

⁴¹ In addition to Boutry, *Prêtres et paroisses*, see P. Pierrard, *Histoire des curés de campagne de 1789 à nos jours* (Paris, 1986) and M. Launay, *Le bon prêtre: le clergé rural au dix-neuvième siècle* (Paris, 1986). Still valuable is J. Brugette, *Le prêtre français et la société contemporaine*, vol. I: *La Restauration (1815–1871)* (Paris, 1933).

⁴² On local conflicts, see especially Boutry, *Prêtres et paroisses* and J. Lafon, *Les prêtres, les fideles et l'Etat: le ménage à trois du xixième siècle* (Paris, 1987), ch. 5. Also, J. Faury, *Cléricalisme et anticléricalisme dans le Tarn (1848–1900)* (Toulouse, 1980). In English, R. Magraw, 'The Conflict in the Villages: Popular Anticlericalism in the Isère (1852–70)', in Zeldin (ed.), *Conflicts in French Society*, and McMillan, 'Religion and Politics'. For cemeteries, T. Kselman, *Death and the Afterlife in Modern France* (Princeton, 1993).

of the priest during a funeral would arouse bitter resentment, as would a perception on the part of parishioners that a priest was charging too much for his services on such occasions, while to deny a religious burial to a parishioner who refused the last rites on his deathbed could produce a veritable clamour of indignation in the village.

Popular anticlericalism derived from a host of other issues. One was clerical denunciations of the perils of dancing, which went down badly with fun-loving young men, the persons perhaps most likely to assert their freedom from the control of the priest as an essential attribute of their masculinity.⁴³ Money, inevitably, was at the root of many disputes, especially when villagers were made to bear the costs of expenses incurred in the maintenance of church property. Education – the issue considered at length in our case study – was another major source of conflict, especially after the passing of the Falloux Law of 1850, which bred resentment among state schoolteachers and their supporters for its explicit encouragement of religious education. A *guerre scolaire* was already being waged on the ground well before the passing of the laic laws, though obviously it took on enhanced significance when the state ceased to show a benevolent attitude to church schools.⁴⁴ But what changed after 1879 was the attitude of government, and the context in which the disputes took place. The antagonisms were already there, and growing.

Crucially, in the 1860s, these antagonisms acquired an explicitly political dimension on account of the (rabidly ultramontane) clergy's support for the papacy in its defence of temporal power and its hostility to the pro-Italian foreign policy adopted by Napoleon III. Priests, accustomed to the support of the secular authorities in their quarrels with truculent villagers, were bewildered by the new developments and already began to manifest the kind of combative and ultra-defensive mentality that would later be manifested by the likes of Father Leroy, the priest in our case study.⁴⁵ On the other side, orchestrated by the anticlerical press, local resentments against the clergy likewise came to take on an increasingly political character. 'Clericalism' was in effect already the enemy, and the *parti du maire* as opposed to the *parti du curé* presented the rising republican movement with the opportunity of building up potentially massive support at the grass-roots level through

⁴³ This view was propounded by the late Ralph Gibson in 'Why Republicans and Catholics Couldn't Stand Each Other in the Nineteenth Century', in F. Tallett and N. Atkin (eds.), *Religion, Society and Politics since 1789* (London, 1991), 107–20.

⁴⁴ Cf. especially Gildea, *Education in Provincial France*.

⁴⁵ Pierrard, *Histoire des curés de campagne*, 203–36. Also J. Maurain, *La politique ecclésiastique du Second Empire de 1852 à 1869* (Paris, 1939).

the adoption of anticlericalism as the top political priority of any future republican government.⁴⁶

Thus, if the chequered political history of France helped to postpone a culture war which involved government, it also made it possible, and, ultimately, likely. Church leaders, while in theory indifferent to the form of regime provided the interests of religion were safeguarded, in practice tended to show a marked preference for the forces of political reaction. Their close identification with the Bourbon Restoration resulted in outbreaks of anticlericalism in 1830–1 (in Paris the church of Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois was sacked and the house of the archbishop of Paris destroyed) and a lingering hostility on the part of ministers of the July Monarchy.⁴⁷ The rift between the church and the republican movement which developed in the 1850s and 1860s was much more serious. Clerical hopes for the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy in the early 1870s and then support for the 'moral order' regime of Marshal MacMahon further convinced republicans that, in the words of Gambetta, 'clericalism' was indeed the enemy. By the time republicans finally became masters in their own house at the end of the 1870s, a French *Kulturkampf* was assured as a new, political, stage in the *guerre des deux Frances*.

THE WAR ON THE GROUND

As we have seen, it was the rural parish clergy who were in the front line of the French culture war and never more so than after the commencement of the legislative culture war in 1879. Our case study focuses on the *guerre scolaire* in the archdiocese of Rennes in Brittany in the mid-1890s – unquestionably one of the hottest spots in the French culture war. Indeed, in the words of Michel Lagrée, the Breton *guerre scolaire* was 'the continuation of *la chouannerie* by other means', since it involved 'the same camps, the same geography, the same ideas', and even included brawls between rival groups of children in an action replay of the dramas of the revolutionary era.⁴⁸ The violence is all the more striking since Cardinal Place, archbishop

⁴⁶ On the emergence of republicanism, Boutry, *Prêtres et paroisses* is fundamental. See also R. Huard, *La naissance du parti politique en France* (Paris, 1996) and P. Nord, *The Republican Moment: Struggles for Democracy in Nineteenth-Century France* (Cambridge, Mass., 1995).

⁴⁷ On the anticlerical disturbances in 1830–1, P. M. Pilbeam, 'Popular Violence in Provincial France after the 1830 Revolution', *English Historical Review* 41 (1976), 278–97.

⁴⁸ Excellent contextualisation of the religious situation in the archdiocese of Rennes (department of Ille-et-Vilaine) is provided by Gildea, *Education in Provincial France* and the contribution by Michel Lagrée to J. Delumeau (ed.), *Le diocèse de Rennes. Histoire des diocèses de France* (Paris, 1979), X, quotation at 221.

of Rennes between 1878 and 1893, though a hawk on the schools issue, generally had the reputation of being a pro-*ralliement* liberal (and had even been on the side of the anti-infallibilist minority of French bishops at the Vatican Council). His successors, first the short-lived Gonindard and then Cardinal Labouré, were also liberals (the latter being a particularly staunch supporter of Leo XIII's conciliatory policy towards the French Republic). The same could not be said of many of their Breton clergy, however.

Consider first the case of Father Jules Leroy, an implacable enemy of the *état laïc* and Ferry's 'école sans Dieu', who in December 1896 was sentenced to fifteen days imprisonment for the use of abusive language in public and for acts of violence committed against the person of a young girl, Rosalie Plihon, who had transferred from the local religious school to a state school in a neighbouring village.⁴⁹ From the indignant account of the incident given in the republican press, it emerged that the preceding September Leroy, vicar in the commune of Saint-Alban near Saint-Brieuc, had accosted the girl in the street, accusing her of luring another pupil away from the congregational school. (In reality, Rosalie had been commissioned by the father of the girl to accompany her to her new school.) Plihon and her new teachers, yelled the priest, were nothing but 'des saletés' ('filth'). The priest was all the more indignant with young Plihon because he had recently fed her when she was hungry, and her ingratitude made her in his eyes a 'vaurienne', 'une canaille', 'une fille perdue' ('a good-for-nothing', 'scum', 'a lost girl'). This verbal abuse was accompanied by physical assault, the priest having laid his hand roughly on the girl's and pushed and shoved her for a distance of some 200 metres, until she fell into a ditch. Not only was this attack premeditated – the priest had warned Plihon's sister the day before that he meant to teach the girl a lesson – but afterwards the cleric had shown not the slightest remorse. When Rosalie's mother went to remonstrate with him at the presbytery, Leroy, calmly smoking his pipe, reiterated that he considered the girl to be 'une canaille et une vaurienne' ('a guttersnipe and a good-for-nothing').

A few days after the assault, encountering the understandably still frightened girl on the street, the priest had threatened to attack her again. A month later, running into Rosalie and her sister Jeanne, the priest first made fun of their mother, who was ill, and then stuck out his tongue at Rosalie and pretended to spit on her face. All of these aggressive actions on the

⁴⁹ The following account is based on the story run by *Le Démocrate*, 19 December 1896, under the headline 'Un vicaire en correctionnelle'. A cutting was appended to the dossier 'Propagande cléricale anti-scolaire' drawn up by the Inspector of the Academy of Rennes and dated 9 February 1897, located in Archives Nationales (AN) F17 9194.

part of the priest had allegedly driven the mother mad, and caused her to be hospitalised at Saint-Brieuc. Showing scant sympathy for the woman's plight, the priest told Jeanne Plihon that her mother would soon be dead, though this would not have happened had she and her sister come to fetch either him or the parish priest. These constant provocations on the part of the priest eventually goaded the girls' father into insulting the cleric, whereupon the latter immediately denounced him to the authorities, writing to the magistrate that the postman Plihon was 'a notorious drunkard' – a slander, according to the newspaper report, since all testified to the good conduct and zeal of this state employee.

During his own trial, Leroy had aggravated his misdemeanours by still more bad behaviour. He declined to recognise any authority other than that of the church, and far from showing any signs of regret, he had continued to affirm that he had acted fully within his rights. Confronted with evidence from a witness, he had made great play of feigning to read a brochure, and while charges were being read out, he had ostentatiously cleaned his fingernails, fidgeted with his clerical costume and studied his watch. Several times he had interrupted the hearing with his outbursts. In sentencing him to prison, the tribunal also awarded costs against him.

Father Leroy was hardly a typical representative of the nineteenth-century French clergy, the great majority of whom aspired to be dutiful shepherds of their flocks and to live up to the almost impossible ideal of *le bon curé*. Friction between priests and some of their parishioners may have been a more or less endemic feature of village life, but it rarely resulted in physical violence or court actions. Yet all priests were conscious of being men apart. Though usually from modest rural origins themselves, priests were distinguished from their flocks by their superior education and assumed their right to play a leading, even determining, role in the life of their communities. Their seminary training encouraged them to think of themselves as different from other men, imbued with 'the eminent dignity of the priest' desired by the Council of Trent, and entitled to a degree of deference from their parishioners. This was usually forthcoming in regions of fervent religious practice (like Brittany), though in more de-Christianised areas respect for the sacerdotal character was less willingly granted and challenges to priestly authority more frequent.⁵⁰

Leroy's estimate of the dignity of the priest was doubtless exaggerated by any, even Breton, standards, but it was certainly not unknown for a priest to lift his hands against children. Reports from primary school inspectors

⁵⁰ R. Gibson, *A Social History of French Catholicism 1789–1914* (London, 1989), esp. 78–80.

tell of other incidents, notably at catechism classes, where the priest would box the ears or even kick the backside of a recalcitrant pupil – invariably one from a state school – allegedly for being guilty of showing dumb insolence or a marked lack of enthusiasm for the lessons.⁵¹ Priests might also become abusive with secular schoolmistresses who tried to include their young charges in religious processions organised by clerics. In one incident, described by the Academy Inspector of Rennes as ‘sauvage’, at the village of Plouër, the priest, a Father Hervé, harangued the *institutrice*, Mlle Tilly, first in front of the local church, from where the procession set off, and then, after the teacher had stood her ground with her children, at the procession’s destination, a chapel in a neighbouring hamlet.⁵²

‘Sauvage’ might seem an overblown term for an incident of this kind, but it would be wrong to underestimate the violence to which young *instituteurs*, and more particularly *institutrices*, might be subjected by local populations who had been fired up by clerical agitators. Rarely do we hear the women teachers speaking with their own voices, but one particularly graphic account gives a good idea of the kind of abuse to which such young women could be subjected by those who, like Father Leroy, regarded them as ‘filth’.

In a letter dated 22 June 1896, the new *institutrice* at Pordic informed the Inspector of the Academy of Rennes of the welcome she received on her first day at school. Arriving in the village the day before she was due to take up her appointment, she found the school door locked and the priest and mayor nowhere to be found. Only with difficulty, through the intervention of the mayor’s maid, did she manage to obtain the keys. Lessons were due to begin at 7 a.m., but instead of greeting her expected pupils, she was confronted by the mayor and his wife who, with great ostentation, paraded a group of about twenty children off to the local religious school, run by nuns. Lots of other villagers, including local bigwigs, then turned up and loitered outside the school for several hours, regularly chanting in unison: ‘Long live the nuns! Long live liberty! Down with the women teachers!’ Some children threw stones into the courtyard, and some older boys began to dance around and to shout insulting remarks. Even little girls were allowed to pull faces at her without being reprimanded by the nuns, who had also come along to watch.

Only two mothers had had the courage to bring their children along to the state school, and they too were the object of vile abuse, including threats

⁵¹ AN F17 9194 *instituteur* of Bégard to Inspector of Academy of Rennes, 25 February 1894.

⁵² Ibid., ‘Encore un scandale clérical’, cutting from *L’Union Libérale* (the republican newspaper of Dinan), 11 October 1896, and dossier ‘Propagande cléricalle anti-scolaire’.

to cut off their hair. One of the women was so affected by the hostility that she fell ill later in the day, and decided to take her child away. Later on, in the afternoon, a drunken woman holding rosary beads in one hand and a scapulary in the other appeared outside her window and began to sing: 'I'm a Christian, that's my glory' and other similar religious songs. She then went off to the nuns and came back brandishing a broom and shouting: 'This is for whipping the hounds of hell!' In her report to her superior, the *institutrice* remained calm and collected, merely recounting the facts of her experience and making no accusations against anyone.⁵³ The inspector, however, was less reticent about expressing his indignation, and suggested that, though no priest was present, no orchestrated incident of this kind could have taken place without the priest's approval.⁵⁴ One suspects that Father Leroy would have approved.

The Leroy incident which we have chosen to highlight was thus only one of many involving clerical resistance to the imposition of the 'laic laws' in the *guerre scolaire*. The particular law at issue in these episodes was that of 30 October 1886, concerning the laicisation of school personnel. The clergy had campaigned strenuously against its passage, and, after it became law, they continued to combat it with every means at their disposal. Advocates of religious education realised that the best way to undermine the law was to set up private religious schools in direct competition with the local village state schools, and to this end priests, usually with the backing of their bishops, established local committees to organise the financing of their project. They regularly used their pulpits to appeal directly to their parishioners to give generously to the cause, and once the schools were built, they continued to take advantage of Sunday mass to ask for money to pay for their upkeep and to try to persuade families to send their sons and daughter to the nuns or brothers. As diocesan literature made clear, everything possible had to be done to resist neutrality in education, described in Leroy's diocesan bulletin as 'an irreparable evil'.⁵⁵

Father Leroy's intransigence, therefore, was dictated not just by his own peculiarly violent personality but by a sense that he was doing his duty as a footsoldier in the culture war, carrying out the orders of his bishop, as explained in diocesan bulletins which assured him that no peace was possible on the educational front without God or Jesus Christ. The literature told him that Catholics had been fighting for the right to run their own religious schools for a century, and that now was no time to give up the struggle.⁵⁶

⁵³ Ibid., *institutrice* at Pordic to Inspector of Academy of Rennes, Pordic, 22 June 1896.

⁵⁴ Ibid., dossier 'Propagande cléricale anti-scolaire'. ⁵⁵ Ibid. ⁵⁶ Ibid.

Leroy's contempt for the civil authorities at his trial can be explained by his sense that he had been going about God's work, and that his defence of Catholic education was a cause dear to his superiors.

The importance attached by the bishops to the strategy of opening up religious schools in competition to those of the state was obvious from the pomp and ceremony which they brought to the opening of each new school. The bishop, or his vicar-general, always made a point of being present, even in the most humble hamlet, and their appearances were calculated to have a powerful impact on the minds of the simple peasant population. Benefactors were thanked effusively and, in a telling ritual, a small procession of little boys or little girls would carry the crucifix ceremoniously into the new classrooms, each of which would be blessed.⁵⁷

Little wonder, then, as the educational authorities were obliged to recognise, that in a *pays de catholicité* like Brittany, the state schools found it hard to establish themselves, despite the high quality of the teaching they could offer. Leroy was no isolated figure. Indeed, in many Breton villages the priest could count on support from the municipal council, as we have already seen at Pordic. The mayor, for instance, might neglect to authorise necessary repairs to the state school building, or refuse to provide heating for the classrooms.⁵⁸ In another incident, a mayor arranged for the school furniture to be removed from the state school on its laicisation, and placed in the schoolhouse of the rival congregational school. It took the intervention of the gendarmes to restore the benches to their proper place.⁵⁹

The conduct of Father Leroy is significant not only for its violence but for the evidence it provides of the means adopted by the clergy to promote schools run by religious orders. It is significant, for instance, that he was much vexed by what he regarded as Rosalie Plihon's ingratitude. She had formerly been the recipient of his charity – as he said, he had put food in her belly – and her way of thanking him was to connive with the hated secular schoolmistresses of another village. The distribution of charitable assistance to the indigent was a matter in which priests were traditionally involved and it was a not uncommon complaint from lay schoolmasters and schoolmistresses that, in conjunction with local notables, priests would sometimes reserve their favours for families who, in return for help, would send their children to the church school.⁶⁰ Similarly, clerical influence, exercised in conjunction with local employers, could determine

⁵⁷ Ibid. ⁵⁸ Ibid., primary inspector to Inspector of Academy of Rennes, Dinan, 21 January 1897.

⁵⁹ Ibid., primary inspector to Inspector of Academy of Rennes, Dinan, 28 September 1896.

⁶⁰ Ibid., primary inspector to Inspector of Academy of Rennes, Dinan, 21 January 1897.

whether or not workers found jobs and could lead to the boycotting of local shopkeepers.⁶¹ The school war was often a dirty war.

Even the confessional, it would appear, was used to put pressure on families – and more particularly women – through the threat to withhold absolution unless their children were sent to the local religious school.⁶² Priests also made a point of travelling around their rural parishes in order to visit families in their homes – often in the absence of the husband – to bring a personal touch to their persuasive efforts. Families were often flattered to receive these visits as a token of the esteem in which they were held by the priest.⁶³ The Plihon family – in which the husband, significantly, was an employee of the republican state – was evidently not of this stamp, but it is clear from the priest's remark to Rosalie's sister that he could have made himself available to their mother in her illness had he been called to her bedside – with, of course, the implication that she would need to conform to his rules and accept his authority.

Other methods of pressurising local people, which someone like Leroy would almost certainly have adopted, included showing favouritism at catechism classes to the pupils of the religious schools. In order for a child to make his or her first communion, it was necessary to reach a certain level of understanding of the catechism. A constant complaint from the secular schoolteachers was that their pupils were subjected to a much harder test, sometimes being put through their paces as many as three or four times before they were deemed to be ready for their big day. This was not only stressful for the children concerned but also disappointing, even humiliating, for their families. Fear of seeing one's child denied the right to go forward for his or her first communion served as a powerful disincentive for parents to send their offspring to the local state school.⁶⁴ Moreover, priests ensured that the children of church schools were given pride of place in church, and as we have already seen, selected to occupy the place of honour at ceremonies and processions.⁶⁵ In Brittany, as priests well knew, religion still mattered, and they skilfully played on the pride and sensitivities of families to persuade them to confide their children's education to the nuns or brothers.

The case of Father Leroy and all the other incidents related in this account of the *guerre scolaire* in the department of the Côtes-du-Nord are, in

⁶¹ Ibid., primary inspector to Inspector of Academy of Rennes, Guingamp, 26 January, 1897.

⁶² Ibid., *instituteur* of Bégard to Inspector of Academy of Rennes, 25 February 1894.

⁶³ Ibid., 'dossier 'Propagande cléricale anti-scolaire'.

⁶⁴ Ibid., and primary inspector to Inspector of Academy of Rennes, Dinan, 21 January 1897.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

themselves, banal, though it would seem that, in view of the human factor involved, they deserve more than condescension at the hands of posterity. The more important point is that, collectively, they show the ferocity of the struggle on the ground in the 'war between the two Frances'. Nor should it be thought that all of these episodes take us a long way away from the world of Parisian intellectuals, journalists and politicians. Such incidents were all grist to the mill of the Parisian press and its local editions. *La Croix* and the right-wing press would present the priests and nuns as martyrs at the hands of the republican state.⁶⁶ The anticlerical press exploited the example of such as Father Leroy to flag up the peril posed by clerical contempt for republican institutions and the necessity for an intensification of the secularisation programme. In the mid-1890s, as in the 1860s, the adepts of *la foi laïque* considered that their vision would never be fulfilled as long as the Concordat remained in place, and called more insistently for the separation of church and state.

BEYOND 1905

The Dreyfus affair and its aftermath once again pushed anticlericalism right to the top of the political agenda, and between 1899 and 1905, with the left firmly in the driving seat, the Republic mounted its fiercest onslaught yet against the church. Conciliatory spirits like Cardinal Labouré of Rennes were powerless in a situation dominated by intransigents like the Radical leader Emile Combes in Paris and the new Pope, Pius X, in Rome.⁶⁷ The Breton clergy, with the support of the extreme right, continued to offer violent, but ultimately impotent, resistance to the Separation Law of 1905, and must be numbered among the losers in the French culture war. They could, however, derive satisfaction from victory in the *guerre scolaire*: between 1903 and 1920 the number of pupils attending state schools dropped dramatically, while the number attending Catholic schools rose.⁶⁸ In the twentieth century, their alienation from the republican state would be reinforced by the leadership of an archbishop of Rennes of a very different stamp to Labouré: Cardinal Charost, a sympathiser with the neo-royalist and proto-fascist Action Française of Charles Maurras.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ On *La Croix*, and its virulent strain of Catholic antisemitism, P. Sorlin, *La Croix et les juifs (1880-1889): Contribution à l'histoire de l'antisémitisme contemporaine* (Paris, 1967). See also D. Delmaire, 'Antisémitisme des catholiques au vingtième siècle: de la revendication au refus', in K. Chadwick (ed.), *Catholicism, Politics and Society in Twentieth-Century France* (Liverpool, 2000), 26-46.

⁶⁷ Larkin, *Church and State after the Dreyfus Affair*; Mayeur, *La Séparation*.

⁶⁸ Statistics in *Le Diocèse de Rennes*, 223. ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 226ff.

At the national level, the Separation Law of 1905 is often seen as an armistice in the war between clericals and *laïcs*, and the First World War, which brought the *union sacrée* of 1914, as its definitive peace.⁷⁰ Such a view overlooks the fact that the war of the two Frances continued well into the twentieth century. Catholics, both laymen and clergy, in rallying to the flag in 1914 remained loyal to a vision of France as first and foremost a Catholic nation.⁷¹ Their hatred of a Republic that was allegedly run by an infamous mafia of Jews, Protestants and freemasons, did not disappear, and was often translated into support for Action Française, at least until its condemnation by Pius XI in 1926.⁷² Even progressive Catholics like the 'personalist' philosopher Emmanuel Mounier retained a visceral dislike of the ideal of individualist democracy enshrined in the Republic. For Mounier, as for many self-proclaimed Christian democrats, democracy was a communitarian ideal, the antithesis of the 'rights of man' proclaimed in 1789, and was to be realised in a politics of the 'third way' that was 'neither left nor right'.⁷³

It was largely out of this obsessive antipathy to liberalism and all its works that Catholics, led by the great majority of their bishops, were among the most enthusiastic supporters of the Vichy regime in 1940, giving a warm welcome to an authoritarian polity which signalled that it wanted to reverse sixty years of *laïcité* and to resurrect the corporate and confessional state of the pre-1789 era. Religious orders regained the right to teach and religious teaching was allowed once more in state schools.⁷⁴ Vichy's antisemitism repelled some Catholics, but enhanced its standing with many others.⁷⁵ The years 1940–4, France's darkest years in modern times, were another, and more murderous, episode in the war of the two Frances.⁷⁶

Nor was the antagonism entirely one-sided. Anticlericalism persisted in many sections of society long after 1905. Even during the First World War Catholics had their patriotism called into question by purveyors of the *rumeur infâme*, 'the infamous rumour' that the pope was on the side of the Central Powers and wanted France to lose the war in order to prepare

⁷⁰ Cf C. Langlois, 'Catholiques et laïcs', in Nora, *Les lieux de mémoire* (Quarto edition), 2327–58.

⁷¹ As an example of Catholic patriotic discourse, Abbé Stephen Coubé, *Du champ de bataille au ciel* (Paris, 1916).

⁷² The essential work is now J. Prévotat, *Les Catholiques et l'Action française: Histoire d'une condamnation 1899–1939* (Paris, 2001).

⁷³ Cf J. Hellman, *Emmanuel Mounier and the New Catholic Left, 1930–1950* (Toronto, 1981); Z. Sternhell, *Ni droite ni gauche: l'idéologie fasciste en France* (Paris, 1983).

⁷⁴ W. D. Halls, *Politics, Society and Christianity in Vichy France* (Oxford, 1995).

⁷⁵ For the instructive trajectory of Xavier Vallat, Vichy's Commissaire général aux questions juives, L. Joly, *Xavier Vallat: Du nationalisme chrétien à l'antisémitisme d'Etat 1891–1972* (Paris, 2001).

⁷⁶ The best survey is now J. Jackson, *France: The Dark Years 1940–1944* (Oxford, 2001).

the way for a Catholic reaction.⁷⁷ If religious pacification was the order of the day in the Bloc National government formed in 1919, anticlericalism returned with a vengeance as the central plank in the Radical Herriot's programme in 1924.⁷⁸ If the Third Republic continued to deny French women the vote in the inter-war years – the much-vaunted 'universal' suffrage of the Republic was in reality manhood suffrage – it was because Radical politicians still professed fears for the safety of the Republic should the clergy acquire the opportunity to manipulate the female vote through the confessional.⁷⁹

The culture war finally abated after 1945. France after the Second World War was a very different place from the France of the Third Republic. Catholic politicians could now be found in key posts in the polity and the rise of a significant Catholic left produced greater diversity in Catholic political behaviour. In a context in which, on the one hand, traditional religious practice has declined (precipitously since the 1960s), and, on the other hand, the church itself has undergone renewal as a result of the sweeping reforms of the Second Vatican Council, the old religious/secular quarrels have lost much of their relevance.

Nevertheless, they have not entirely disappeared. The religious aspects of the education question, for example, continued to vex the post-war governments of the Fourth and Fifth Republics. Resistance to the Savary proposals to reorganise private (that is, Catholic) schools brought 750,000 demonstrators onto the streets of Versailles as late as 4 March 1984.⁸⁰ For their part, militant secularists are still ready to mobilise in defence of the *idée laïque*. In 1995 some 10,000, chanting anti-papal slogans, marched to commemorate the centenary of the first separation of church and state. In 1996, the solemn requiem mass celebrated at Notre Dame for the deceased ex-president François Mitterrand and the visit of Pope John Paul II to participate in the ceremonies celebrating the fifteen-hundredth anniversary of the baptism of Clovis generated heated protests from those who saw in both incidents an affront to the strict religious neutrality of the state. Moreover, the rise of Islam – now the second religion in France – has

⁷⁷ J. F. McMillan, 'French Catholics, *rumeurs infâmes* and the Union Sacrée, 1914–1918', in F. and M. Coetzee (eds.), *Authority, Identity and the Social History of the First World War* (Oxford, 1995), 113–32.

⁷⁸ On the Herriot episode and Catholic reactions to it, J. F. McMillan, 'Catholicism and Nationalism in France: The Case of the *Fédération nationale catholique*', in N. Atkin and F. Tallet, *Catholicism in Britain and France since 1789* (London, 1996), 151–63.

⁷⁹ Cf. J. F. McMillan, *Housewife or Harlot: The Place of Women in French Society 1870–1940* (Brighton, 1981), 179.

⁸⁰ N. Beattie, 'Yeast in the Dough? Catholic Schooling in France, 1981–1985', in Chadwick, *Catholicism, Politics and Society*, 197–218.

presented French secularists with a new enemy, and with new symbolic opportunities to champion the 'laic idea', as in the 'headscarf' affair which erupted in 1989, centring on the question of whether Muslim girls had the right to wear their headscarves – a religious symbol – in state schools.⁸¹ A particularly vicious form of state anticlericalism may have ended in 1905, but the wider *guerre des deux Frances* continued to cast a long shadow over the twentieth century, particularly under Vichy. Its memory still has the power to disturb.

⁸¹ 'Introduction', in *ibid.*

CHAPTER 4

*The battle for monasteries, cemeteries and schools: Belgium**

Els Witte

The political and cultural history of Belgium has been characterised by three overlapping zones of tension: the relationship between capital and labour, the religious-philosophical divide and the language dispute between Flanders and francophone Belgium. Of these, the 'religious-philosophical' divide, which pitted Catholics against liberal secular free-thinkers, is considered the oldest. It was a feature above all of the nineteenth century, although its influence continued to be felt long after 1900. If the Catholic-secular cleavage ran deep into Belgian society, this was in part because it involved a contest between fundamentally opposed worldviews. Both Catholics and free-thinkers wished to see their respective visions imposed upon the public and private lives of the citizenry; both sought to equate their respective subcultures with the encompassing identity of the nation.

The Catholic model of society was based on religion, understood as the sacred reality of a higher truth. All other religions or convictions were considered aberrations that had no right to exist. It was the church's mission to lead people toward their supernatural destiny. It was thus important that there should be both solidarity and a structural bond between church and society. According to the pastoral logic of the church, a strong ecclesiastical power base was essential, since only Christian social structures would be able to produce good Catholics. This power base had to be sustained with healthy independent revenues and an ecclesiastical network that could spread the faith without opposition. In order for this network to function effectively, the church needed supplementary institutions that could project its ideology in all spheres of public and private life. Under the *ancien régime* in Belgium, the church had largely been able to achieve these goals.

* Translation from Dutch by Raf Casert and Christopher Clark. I would like to express my gratitude to Roel De Groof for his comments.

From the late eighteenth century, several groups emerged within Belgian society that espoused a totally different worldview. The core idea was that mankind was capable of autonomous action and of creating a workable society without divine intervention. There was an emphasis on man's individual, autonomous and creative reason, and a belief in the progress and perfectibility of mankind. All aspects of social experience were to be scrutinised in the light of reason. It was a vision that was bound to collide head-on with Catholicism. To make it an everyday reality, its proponents had to confront a church that had imposed its view on the entire society for centuries. As a consequence, the liberal movement had to be strongly anticlerical from the outset.

The culture war between these two opposed principles of social order took over a century to be resolved, but it was not continuous. On the contrary, it was fitful and intermittent, mixing long stretches of relative calm with sudden eruptions of open ideological warfare. The period 1857–84, with which the present chapter is concerned, is a case in point. The following analysis is informed by the 'collective action' approach developed by Charles Tilly to analyse the mechanisms of conflict activated by broad social conflicts during periods of instability and revolution. This model is well suited to the analysis of periods of heightened tension within a particular society. Above all it provides us with a means of assessing the extent and intensity of a specific organisational strength of the groups involved.¹ There is no doubt that, by comparison with the preceding era, the years from 1857 to 1884 were marked at all levels by heightened tension. The year 1857 saw widespread violence on the streets for the first time and brought an end to the peaceful compromise politics that had steadily evolved since the birth of the Belgian nation in 1830–1. After 1857, the conflict worsened, battle-lines were drawn and a process of polarisation began that encompassed not only the public at large but also private relations between individuals. It led to real ideological warfare in 1879 and spawned what is known in Belgian historiography as the 'school war' of 1879–84.²

¹ Sidney Tarrow, 'National Politics and Collective Action: Recent Theory and Research in Western Europe and the United States', *Annual Review of Sociology* 14 (1988) 421–40; Gita Deneckere, 'Sociale geschiedenis, het einde van de ideologie en de terugkeer van de bezieling. Een essay met de focus op het onderzoek naar collectieve actie in de jaren 1990', *Tijdschrift voor Sociale Geschiedenis* 26/3 (2000), 239–62.

² The rubrics of the sections that follow are loosely based on the relevant chapters in Els Witte, Jan Craeybeckx and Alain Meynen, *Political History of Belgium from 1830 Onwards* (Brussels, 2000), 27–31, 37–9, 41–3, 62–4, 64–9.

FROM BARGAINING POLICY TO OPEN CONFLICT (1830–1857)

The violence that opened up the divide in 1857 can only be fully understood against the background of the 'bargaining policy' that preceded it. We should thus look briefly at earlier developments. In 1830, Belgian Catholics and Liberals entered into an alliance against the enlightened absolutism of Willem I, who had headed the United Kingdom of the southern and northern Netherlands since Napoleon's defeat in 1815. Following the successful Belgian Revolution of 1830–1, the first priority was the development of a new nation-state. Both allies aspired to form the new nation as far as possible in their own image, but there was a willingness to compromise on both sides.

The Catholics had good reason to back such a policy of compromise. For half a century, their ideological project had been under siege from the authorities. During the 1780s, when Joseph II ruled over the southern Netherlands from Vienna, secularising and supervisory measures were imposed that opened a first rift with the church.³ The southern Netherlands, which would later become Belgium, were subsequently annexed by the French republicans, and the church suffered the same painful fate as the ecclesiastical institutions of France itself. Religious societies were abolished and the church's possessions were seized and sold off to farmers, industrialists and speculators. The privileged position of the church became a thing of the past. A degree of stabilisation was possible under the Concordat agreed between Napoleon and the papacy in 1801: the church's stewardship over society was confirmed, and its functionaries were now paid by the state. But this fell far short of restoring the church to its former powers.⁴ Willem I's enlightened absolutism backed the enterprising bourgeoisie and continued to develop the foundations of a secular society. Within the terms and principles of the Concordat, church and monarchy fought a fierce battle between 1815 and 1830. The main bones of contention were the constitutional status of the different religions (the north was Protestant), the appointment of bishops by the monarch and the introduction of a secular education policy.⁵

³ Maurits De Vroede, 'Een overgangstijd', in *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, 15 vols (Haarlem, 1981), X, 14; on Joseph II's ecclesiastical policy more generally, see T. C. W. Banning, *Joseph II* (London, 1994), 44–7, 92–101, 112–19.

⁴ Louis Prenel, 'Godsdienstig leven in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden', in *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* (Haarlem, 1983), XI, 48–58; Robert Devleeshouwer, 'De Zuidelijke Nederlanden tijdens het Frans Bewind', in *ibid.*, 201–6.

⁵ Roger Aubert, 'Kerk en godsdienst in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden, 1815–ca. 1840', in *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, XI, 118–21; Johan Bornewasser, 'Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden, 1815–1830', in *ibid.*, 257–9.

Among the senior clergy and the Catholic landowners, the idea took hold that the recognition of freedom of religion could be the right tactical and strategic instrument to keep a meddling government at bay. They were convinced that the foundation of a parliamentary regime in an overwhelmingly Catholic nation like Belgium would inevitably have the effect of restoring the church's position. Under such a dispensation there could be no holding back the church; it would weave itself back into the fabric of society, rebuild religious institutions and help to build a nation steeped in the values of the Catholic church.⁶

After 1830, the alliance with the Liberals yielded happy results for the Catholics. The church now enjoyed a freedom of action that helped to compensate for what had been lost in the era of enlightened and revolutionary secularisation. The number of priests increased and parish life regained its vigour. New confraternities were founded, congregations established and monasteries built. Together, these came to constitute a formidable social force. Massive Catholic popular movements imparted a new impetus to religious life, especially in the countryside and small towns.⁷ In parliament, the Catholics worked to push through new laws to further expand the influence of Catholic institutions and to consolidate the authority of Catholic morals. In this campaign, the church had one crucial asset, which it exploited relentlessly – namely, its ability, by virtue of its spiritual authority, to influence the behaviour of the faithful. This authority was invoked systematically during election campaigns.⁸ Helped by the fact that the electoral law gave rural voters a numerical advantage,⁹ the Catholics were initially able to win a majority in parliament and government. They used this position to bind the Belgian state to their own project. All national ceremonies were given a Catholic dimension and in just about all public institutions, be it the armed forces, education, the courts or charity, the Catholic religion and its symbols were prevalent.

The liberals realised that the revolution and the establishment of a liberal state stood a much better chance of success if they could count on the support of the church. A great many moderate liberals were still practising Catholics. They did not object to a society based on Catholic

⁶ Aubert, 'Kerk en godsdienst', 121–2; Jan Art, 'Kerk en religie, 1844–1914', in *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* (Haarlem, 1977), XII, 168–70.

⁷ Art, 'Kerk en religie', 169–73.

⁸ Els Witte, 'Les évêques belges et les élections de 1830 à 1847', in Gaston Braive and Jacques Lory (eds.), *L'Eglise et l'Etat à l'époque contemporaine. Mélanges dédiés à la mémoire de Mgr Aloïs Simon* (Brussels, 1975), 577–603.

⁹ Romain Van Eenoo, 'De evolutie van de kieswetgeving in België van 1830 tot 1919', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 92/3 (1979) 333–5.

morals. Yet they considered state control over opinions, doctrines and morals to be in violation of the liberal principles of freedom. The radical proponents of a clear state–church division were a minority with little impact. In addition to differences over these issues, early liberalism was marked by another rift that was political in character. Among the industrial bourgeoisie, intellectuals and civil servants who had backed Willem I's policy, there were a great many opponents of the revolution. This division seriously impeded the emergence of a strong liberal model of society.¹⁰

In the new Belgian state, Catholicism was no longer the official state religion. Yet the authorities were obliged to keep their policy in line with the religion of the majority of the population. The constitution and subsequent laws were a good example of this bargaining policy.¹¹ They granted the church the advantages of the separation, in the sense that religious services were expanded and charity and education escaped state control. The disadvantages such a division entailed were largely neutralised because the clergy and the church's infrastructure could still count on state funding. There was one fundamental concession: the church had to recognise the principle of freedom of opinion, raising the spectre of the establishment of a secular society. The terminology of the constitution was kept vague, allowing both sides to interpret it in different ways. It created an ambiguity that would lead to conflict later on. On the other hand, the electoral law was a prime example of the willingness to engineer a workable compromise. The wealthy citizen could fully participate in government, but the high tax threshold for electors in cities ensured that it would be extremely difficult to build a nation-wide power base. A compromise was also achieved on the chief rites of passage in the human lifespan – birth, marriage and death – all of which had been managed by the church under the *ancien régime*. Birth registrations remained a matter for public institutions and civil marriages took precedence over church weddings, but when it came to funerals and burials, the church retained the upper hand.¹² The most telling example of the bargaining policy was the 1842 Law on Primary Education. Under this law, the state could organise public education, but the church still

¹⁰ Jean Stengers, 'Sentiment national, sentiment orangiste et sentiment français à l'aube de notre indépendance', *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* 27/3–4 (1950), 993–1029; 29/1 (1951), 51–92; Els Witte, *Politieke machtsstrijd in en om de voornaamste Belgische steden, 1830–1848*, 2 vols. (Brussels, 1973) I, 72–128.

¹¹ Aloïs Simon, *Le Cardinal Sterckx et son temps, 1792–1867* (Wetteren, 1950), passim; Colette Lebas, *L'union des catholiques et des libéraux de 1830 à 1847* (Leuven and Paris, 1960), passim.

¹² Simon, *Le Cardinal Sterckx*, 565–70.

had its say on content and control. What resulted was a system of public denominational education.¹³

Belgium was the first nation on the European mainland to experience accelerated industrialisation during the first half of the nineteenth century. The country was richly endowed with natural resources (especially coal) and was quick to adopt modern company structures such as corporations and financial holdings. One consequence of these changes was the increasing social and political prominence of the industrial, financial and commercial bourgeoisie. The intellectual 'support class' of the bourgeoisie (civil servants, the liberal professions, etc.) also gained in social influence. Together they formed the elite group that would establish the basis of a new and more assertive and united liberalism. By the time the Belgian nation had established itself at the end of the 1830s, the different liberal groups were beginning to combine forces and had started to work together on the concept of a liberal nation. They used the liberal elements of the constitution as the foundation on which to build a programme whose central ideas were rooted in a secular concept of citizenship. Support networks and the beginnings of a liberal culture gradually coalesced around these objectives. The liberal message was initially rather diffuse, but its focus was soon sharpened by the secular-clerical conflicts that proliferated in Belgium from the 1830s onwards. As early as 1834, the liberals countered the establishment of a Catholic ultramontane university in Brussels with one of their own, which would establish strong links with other liberal associations.¹⁴

Freemasonry played a key role in these developments. Masonic lodges had long been a meeting place for the backers of a secular society, even during French domination and the United Kingdom of the Netherlands. The anticlerical freemasons used the lodges during election campaigns. The condemnation, once again, of the lodges by the bishops in 1838 only reinforced the identification of freemasonry with the anticlerical opposition and drew the masons further into politics. In Brussels and other major cities, they were at the heart of the establishment of Liberal electoral associations. In 1846, these were loosely joined in the nation-wide Liberal Congress, a major step forward in the establishment of a cohesive liberal

¹³ Els Witte, 'Une question de conscience. Over de houding van de Belgische katholieken tegenover het openbaar onderwijs', in Els Witte, Jan De Groof and Jeffrey Tyssens (eds.), *Het Schoolpact van 1958. Ontstaan, grondlijnen en toepassing van een Belgisch compromis* (Brussels, 1999), 442–4, 463–5, 478–80.

¹⁴ Jean-Jacques Hoebanx, 'La fondation de l'université libre de Belgique', in *Pierre-Théodore Verhaegen. L'homme, sa vie, sa légende. Bicentenaire d'une naissance* (Brussels, 1996), 61–74.

project.¹⁵ Liberal social life also expanded well beyond the confines of high politics. Associations and societies became places where citizens discussed politics and read newspapers. The media became one of liberalism's most important instruments of propaganda and socialisation. Liberalism and press freedom were inextricably intertwined. Liberals believed deeply in the power of words. The public nature of all civil questions was an essential element in liberal democracy, a fact that further enhanced the value of the printed word. The liberal press became the dominant presence within the Belgian public sphere. Parliamentary reporting had a high priority, while pamphlets and electoral flyers reinforced the liberal media during election campaigns. Charismatic figures, great orators exuding authority, helped to keep the movement together.¹⁶ All these elements in combination enabled the Liberals to force a major breakthrough during the 1840s, both in the capital Brussels and other major cities.¹⁷ During this period, liberalism remained a primarily urban movement. The electoral laws, among other things, prevented it from gaining power nation-wide. Yet there was a momentary breakthrough in 1847, and Belgium was ruled by a Liberal government until 1851.

As the liberal movement grew, so did the discontent with the bargaining policies. At first, the opposition confined itself to containing the most excessive Catholic demands. The electoral law – the Catholic power base – quickly became a recurring bone of contention. So did education policy. The 1850 Secondary Education Law was an interesting case in point.¹⁸ The Liberals tried to shackle the power of the clergy, but Catholic resistance was such that both sides were forced to agree on a compromise. After the 1848 revolutions, a tide of conservatism swept through Europe and King Leopold I used the situation to reimpose unitary Catholic–Liberal governments. This measure reduced the political influence of the Liberals and reinforced anti-Catholic feelings within the liberal movement. Electoral losses led to redoubled organisational efforts and the party line hardened. A new generation of Liberals emerged who were critical of the compromise policies that had muffled the impact of the liberal project.

¹⁵ John Bartier, 'Théodore Verhaegen, la franc-maçonnerie et les sociétés politiques', in Guy Cambier (ed.), *Laïcité et franc-maçonnerie* (Brussels, 1981), 75–159; Witte, *Politieke machtsstrijd*, I, 188–212, 289–306.

¹⁶ Jan Art, 'Socio-cultureel leven in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden, 1815–ca. 1840', in *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, XI, 146–50; Romain Van Eenoo, 'Pers, 1841–1873', in *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, XII, 184–6; Achille Erba, *L'esprit laïque en Belgique sous le gouvernement libéral doctrinaire (1857–1870) d'après les brochures politiques* (Brussels, 1967), 31–9.

¹⁷ Witte, *Politieke machtsstrijd*, I, 289–338.

¹⁸ Maurits De Vroede, 'Onderwijs, 1840–1878', in *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* (Haarlem, 1978), XIII, 111–13.

The democrats came to the aid of the liberal bourgeoisie. Since its inception in 1830, Belgium had had an active group of early socialists and radical democrats. After the 1848 defeat, that group was primarily reinforced with banned French Proudhonists. These activists focused their efforts almost entirely on anticlerical campaigns. Contact was established with a new generation of young, radical students at Brussels University, who in turn developed links with the social progressive wing of the Liberal Party.¹⁹ The lowering of the electoral tax threshold doubled the number of voters to 2 per cent of the population and allowed the Liberal government to avoid the spilling over of the 1848 revolution into Belgium. At the same time, franchise extension forced elitist liberalism to face up to the demands of a broader, middle-class constituency. This middle class wanted to be taken into account; it wanted to extend the reach of the liberal programme and to be integrated in liberal social life. These changes were accompanied by a growing emphasis on Jacobin principles of social equality and a more strident anticlericalism.²⁰

In short, formidable pressures accumulated within the liberal opposition during the second half of the 1850s. Belgium had come of age and the Liberals now felt it was high time to impose their vision on the new nation. This meant, of course, that the bargaining policies of earlier decades had to be left behind. Anticlericalism was in many ways the ideal strategy to reach that goal. In 1857, the Catholics provided the Liberals with the perfect pretext to launch their campaign: the Monastic Law.

FLASHPOINT: THE MONASTIC LAW OF 1857

If the above mentioned conflicts had already triggered some agitation and collective action,²¹ they did little to prepare Belgium for the events of 1857. During a period of several months, a conflict raged in which all the instruments of parliamentary and extra-parliamentary opposition were deployed. For the first time since independence in 1830, street violence brought about a change in government. It brought the Liberals to power for thirteen years and relegated the era of bargaining to the history books.

The conflict centred on the dispensation of charity. During the *ancien régime*, charity had been controlled by the clergy. The French Republic,

¹⁹ John Bartier, 'Le mouvement démocratique à l'Université libre de Bruxelles au temps de ses fondateurs', in John Bartier, *Libéralisme et socialisme au XIX^e siècle* (Brussels, 1981), 25–62.

²⁰ Els Witte, 'De Belgische Vrijdenkersorganisaties (1854–1914) Ontstaan, ontwikkeling en rol', *Tijdschrift voor de Studie van de Verlichting* 5/2 (1977), 141–7.

²¹ Gita Deneckere, *Antiklerikaal straatruoer in de politieke geschiedenis van België, 1831–1914* (Brussels, 1998), 9–36.

however, had brought it under the wings of new institutions of public benevolence and the law of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands merely extended this system. After 1830, the church used the freedoms guaranteed by the constitution to develop new initiatives. Thanks to a wave of donations and legacies, congregations and parishes quickly built up vast patrimonies, with the result that public relief and assistance for the poor was soon second to that of the church. However, there was no legal framework for the charitable activity of such religious institutions and the further development of monasteries made the problem even more acute. The Catholics wanted to review the secular laws and adapt them to the new situation. They pressed all the more urgently for this when it became known that Liberal ministers intended to eliminate the freedom of donations to the church and return charity under public control. In order to consolidate their control over poor relief, the Catholics responded with demands that the freedom of charity be formally guaranteed.²²

In 1857, the Catholics presented a parliamentary bill to this effect. The bill was a gift from heaven for the Liberals. The Catholics had provided their enemies with highly effective rhetorical weapons. The 'main morte' of the church was a theme perfectly designed to provoke the bourgeoisie and arouse its ire against the clergy. During the French and Dutch periods, the bourgeoisie had divided up the church's possessions and the seized properties had proved highly profitable – secularised religious buildings provided excellent premises for factory production.²³ Now the threat of restitution loomed. Bourgeois critics were also repelled by the church's encroachment upon family inheritances through gifts and legacies to religious institutions; indeed they saw the diversion of funds from family assets to religious institutions as tantamount to theft. The traditional theme of monastic wealth struck a deep chord with the liberal citizen. It highlighted the hunger for money of a hypocritical church that preached poverty. And since many religious orders operated under the supervision and discipline of foreign superiors, the Liberals invoked the spectre of a Vatican conspiracy. The political danger of the Jesuits was also raised anew. Finally there was the threat that the clergy would be able through their charitable activity to suborn the poor and thereby undermine the social authority of the liberal bourgeoisie.

²² Emiel Lamberts, *Kerk en liberalisme in het bisdom Gent, 1821–1857*. *Bijdrage tot de studie van het liberaal-catholicisme en het ultramontanisme* (Leuven, 1972), 452–80.

²³ Karel Veraghtert, 'Ambacht en nijverheid in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden, 1790–1844', in *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden*, X, 254–5.

The liberal campaign demonstrates the role played by leading figures in drawing the battle-lines through skilful rhetorical offensives. In the fifteen-month period between the introduction of the bill and its debate in parliament, a series of liberal leaflets inflamed public passions. Walthère Frère-Orban, a former minister and an authoritative figure within the liberal movement, started the polemic and soon others followed. On the eve of the parliamentary debate, a pamphlet entitled 'Le frère quêteur' painted the starkest picture yet, highlighting the clergy's insatiable hunger for wealth and darkly predicting the restoration of the ecclesiastical mortmain. The pamphlets were distributed in massive quantities and hotly debated and analysed in the media. The liberal papers further raised the ante during the debates. A systematic press campaign forced Catholic journalists onto the defensive. Derisive songs and political cartoons, published independently or in satirical magazines, became part of the explosive mix.²⁴ It seems beyond doubt that this inflammatory campaign played an important role in escalating the conflict and accelerating the transition from purely rhetorical to more direct forms of action. A content analysis of the relevant newspapers would be able to shed a definitive light on this.

It was in parliament that the conflict first went beyond the exchange of verbal sallies. During May 1857, the stands were filled to overflowing during the debates and the fiery rhetoric was interrupted by many incidents. Parliament had to be cleared, but the protests continued outside. The throng then left for other political hotspots. There was singing and rejoicing at the homes of Liberal leaders, while a mob smashed the windows of religious buildings and Catholic newspaper offices. By dusk, some 5,000 people were protesting. With active liberal backing, the protests quickly spread to other towns as well – both to large cities such as Antwerp, Ghent and Liège, and to smaller municipalities. Belgium's centralised railway network facilitated the spread of discontent. There were demonstrations for several days; the most violent took place in the small town of Jemappe, where the monks were manhandled, the monastery's furniture smashed and the chapel destroyed.²⁵

These collective actions have been thoroughly analysed in the historical literature. Historians have tended to see them as large-scale charivaris.²⁶ During the first half of the nineteenth century, it has been argued, these traditional, local and informal protests had woven themselves into the

²⁴ Erba, *L'esprit laïque en Belgique*, passim. This work provides an extensive analysis of all the relevant pamphlets.

²⁵ Deneckere, *Geuzengeweld*, 37–62. ²⁶ *Ibid.*, 40–1.

public life of the nation and their focus had shifted from private citizens accused of specific transgressions to political symbols. Before 1857, there had been several occasions on which conflicts had been accompanied by 'custom-made' charivaris. There is some doubt, however, as to whether the collective action of 1857 actually belongs in this category and whether it can truly be regarded as 'spontaneous'. There are several good reasons for considering the action rather as a precursor of the large-scale, organised demonstrations of the progressive liberals. These liberals, seeking to expand their power base, used the threat of the streets as a means of compensating for the lack of representation within the electoral system. The electoral tax system did not offer the middle class enough opportunities to press their demands. An analysis of the social make-up of the groups suggests that the progressives relied on the petty bourgeoisie. It is also significant that the radical democrats and their supporters among the students had affinities with the revolutionary ideologies and thus with the revolutionary tactics of the 1789–1830 period, which included violent street action. There is still need for further detailed research, but we can already discern clear indicators that the anti-Catholic demonstration was an organised action. This view is supported by the involvement of a democratic association of free-thinkers like l'Affranchissement, founded in Brussels in 1854.²⁷ The anticlerical students from Brussels had already established a strong tradition as protest organisers. Moreover, the progressives played a central role in drumming up support for the protest and in mobilising their supporters in the clubs and bars where they met.

This massive tide of protest took the political elite, and certainly the government, by surprise. There were bans on public assembly and protesters were arrested, yet violent clashes with the police were rare. This can be partly explained by the fact that liberal municipal councils, who did not exactly oppose the protests, refused to cede control of their policing powers to the army.

This allows us to highlight another liberal tactic during the conflict: the importance of its municipal power base. In an attempt to bring the street violence within constitutional limits, the mayor of Brussels and the governor took the initiative of having the municipal councils organise petitions on the monastic law and forward them to the government and head of state. Some forty liberal municipalities proceeded to do just that.²⁸ It was not a new tactic – there was a long tradition of petitions to authority, and

²⁷ L'Affranchissement, Minutes, 1860–1875, in Hubert Wouters, *Documenten betreffende de geschiedenis der arbeidersbeweging (1853–1863)* (Leuven and Paris, 1966), 224–90.

²⁸ Deneckere, *Geuzengeweld*, 48.

parliament took them seriously. When Liberals took over the cities, they institutionalised the practice and protested against the concessions to the Catholics through the municipal councils.²⁹ The liberals had long hoped to exploit their municipal victories in order to undermine the national union government. The tactics they had developed now appeared to be working. The government resigned and made way for an all-Liberal government.³⁰

The fact that the Monastic Law opened a deep divide within Belgian society cannot be attributed solely to the liberal offensive. It would probably not have been possible without the collaboration of the democrats and progressives. Another important factor was the weakness of a government incapable of countering such new forms of collective action. Before 1857, the king had been able to make his own choice between a Catholic and a Liberal government. Now for the first time he was forced to appoint his prime minister from among the politicians of the winning party (the Liberals). The year 1857 polarised Catholics and Liberals once and for all. The conflict came to dominate social and political life for decades to come. Those who had backed the Monastic Law were expelled from Liberal ranks and within the Catholic movement the dispute intensified the struggle between liberal Catholics and ultramontanes.

THE SECULAR-CLERICAL CONFLICT PERMEATES PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LIFE (1858-1878)

During the 1860s and 1870s, the private lives of citizens were drawn ever more deeply into the conflicts dividing Belgian society. The reason for this lay partly in the growing social-economic integration of the middle classes, including lesser property-owners, retailers, teachers and small manufacturers. Reformist political pressure from these groups created an encompassing protest movement that defended the specific interest of the middle class in all sectors of society. This battle was fought within both the Catholic and Liberal movements. Political power was at stake, but so was the demarcation of spheres of influence in virtually all areas of daily life. The bourgeoisie had succeeded in slowing the expansion of the national electorate, but after 1870 there were franchise extensions at municipal and provincial level.³¹ Progressive Liberals and Catholics both wanted to capture the new middle-class voters and tried to draw them into their associational networks. They

²⁹ Els Witte, 'The urban petitioning campaigns of 1837-38 and early 1841', *Revue Belge d'Histoire Contemporaine* 3/3-4 (1972), 385-404.

³⁰ Deneckere, *Geuzengeweld*, 48-58. ³¹ Van Eenoo, 'De evolutie van de kieswetgeving', 340-4.

also increasingly targeted their political programmes at the middle classes. The result was a social deepening of the liberal–Catholic conflict.

These developments should also be seen in the light of the continuing struggle between the European powers and the Vatican. By 1870, the pope had embarked on a crusade against liberalism, for which he sought the support of Catholics across Europe. The declaration of papal infallibility and other novel dogmas, the creation of new saints and the introduction of additional jubilees and holy days – these provocative symbolic acts demonstrated the determination of the papacy under Pius IX to confront the forces of secularism and liberalism in European society. The loss of the pope's temporal sovereignty in 1859/70 was more than outweighed by the expansion of his spiritual authority. Like their colleagues across Europe, Belgian ultramontanes hailed Pius IX as a martyr after the fall of Rome and its annexation by the Italian kingdom in 1870. In this context, it was understandable that the Belgian ultramontanes should fully align themselves with the anti-liberal encyclicals. But this sharpening of ideological positions also generated tensions within the Catholic camp, as hard-line ultramontanes became more critical of the less resolute individuals within Catholic ranks. They took the view, for example, that the Catholic parliamentarians were much too weak-kneed. They were especially displeased when a Catholic government of Belgium (the Catholics returned to power in 1870) refused to cut relations with the Italian kingdom.³²

Ultramontane displeasure was further reinforced by developments within the liberal movement. In addition to pursuing their social goals, the progressive liberals now more than ever defended the principle of a secular state in line with a rationalist and positivist ideology that was making inroads throughout Europe. Whereas earlier generations of anticlericals had focused their hostility on the intimate intertwining of church and society, the secularists of the later nineteenth century argued that authoritarian Catholicism, with its monopolistic claim to absolute truth, *itself* constituted a danger for citizens, progress in general and emancipation of the lower social classes. The battle against the church expanded into a struggle for social justice against an unjust balance of power and undue privileges. The free-thinking spirit was propagated through a network of student groups, cultural centres, masonic lodges and the liberal electoral associations. The free-thinkers' association *La Libre Pensée* had been founded in Brussels in 1863 and was soon active in other cities as well, propagating and promoting

³² Lode Wils, 'In het klimaat van de Kulturkampf, 1871–1878', in *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* XIII, 170–2.

secular ideologies, and creating the social basis for a secular identity. In the media, a growing volume of progressive liberal journalism disseminated the principles of positivism to a stable and expanding middle-class readership.³³

The free-thinkers displayed a remarkable energy and resourcefulness as they spread their message, accessibly formulated in popular language, to the public at large. They dispersed academic knowledge across a broad spectrum of disciplines at the same time as they undermined the Catholic vision. Prehistory and the history of antiquity were used to undermine biblical authority. Political history was used to expose the abuses of the church through the ages. Darwinism, geology and astronomy were employed to ridicule the book of Genesis. Physics, chemistry, neurology and psychology provided sceptical readings of mysteries and supernatural phenomena. The consequence was the gradual but comprehensive consolidation of secularism as an ideological system.³⁴ The free-thinkers even created their own heroes, such as the sixteenth-century 'Beggars' who fought the fanatical Catholic Spanish monarch Philip II. These were now celebrated as the hallowed defenders of tolerance and freedom. Militant ultramontanist in Rome and its supporters in Belgium became the target of a virulent anticlericalism. Priests were denounced as the servile militants of the Black International and 'papal vermin', as one famous song put it.³⁵ This extremely combative anticlericalism found its fullest expression in progressive, free-thinking liberalism, where it came to supply a rationale for political action. The introduction of the middle classes into the liberal structure shifted the balance of power within the movement and laid the ground for the dominance of progressive liberals. The more moderate liberals were forced to compromise. The radical views of the progressives on state-church relations now had to be taken into account.

The liberal free-thinkers were right in thinking that Belgian Catholicism was becoming steadily more extreme. The secular measures of the Liberal government had only deepened the hostility and determination of intransigent Catholics. The parliamentary regime had failed to guarantee the traditional rights and prerogatives of the church. Instead, it seemed that the constitution had opened a door to anticlerical liberalism. The only option, as the ultramontanes saw it, was to return to an unadulterated Christian project. In the meantime, the ultramontane bishops had won the support of a new generation of militant ultramontanes from among the nobility and the high bourgeoisie. Like their spiritual brethren of the

³³ Witte, 'De Belgische Vrijdenkersorganisaties', 141–50.

³⁴ Ibid., 160–72.

³⁵ Marcel Moey and Ludo Valcke, 'Geuzen en Geuzenlied', in *Nieuwe Encyclopedie van de Vlaamse Beweging*, 4 vols. (Tielt, 1998), II, 1297–8.

French ultramontane school of Louis Veuillot, they equated liberalism with revolution, irreligion, anarchy and social danger. Christian society needed to be resurrected through the creation of a Catholic state and a combative confessional Catholic movement led by the bishops. Constitutional articles that were considered unacceptable had to be reviewed. The ultramontane social vision invoked the idealised memory of a medieval past suffused with devout Christianity and a harmonious, organic way of life. What was called for was an authentic crusade against liberalism. To win that battle, however, the church had to restore the link with its flock. At many different levels – parishes, the Vincent de Paul societies, the Francis Xavier associations and countless other congregations – efforts were made to lure society back into the orbit of the church. At the same time, ultramontanes began to acquire dominant positions within many Catholic associations. They also played an important role in raising the public profile of the intransigent Catholic media. *Le Bien Public* became the flagship of ultramontanism.³⁶

Soon, it was the most radical players in the conflict who determined the relationship between liberals and Catholics in Belgium. The entire world of politics was obsessed with this battle. Newspapers, pamphlets and brochures set the tone. The liberals, and especially the rationalists among them, believed passionately in the power of words. So did the ultramontanes. Research on media output in 1877 has shown that both the liberal and Catholic papers spent some 30 per cent of their space on the subject. It was an era of polemics and smear campaigns.³⁷ These were flanked by public meetings and lectures that strove to reach as wide an audience as possible. More than ever, elections heightened the tension. The liberal Catholics had further developed their own electoral network and, together with the politicised Catholic groups and the moral pressure of the clergy, they were now capable of mounting a serious challenge to the Liberals.³⁸ Even in the countryside, the tone of the confrontation became increasingly aggressive. Brawls and tirades were commonplace and election victories were celebrated with cannon fire and fireworks.³⁹

This polarisation went well beyond the political groups. All cultural, social and leisure associations were forced into one of the two camps. The church had long railed against ‘bad’ newspapers, novels and stage plays,

³⁶ Emiel Lamberts (ed.), *De kruistocht tegen het liberalisme. Facetten van het ultramontanisme in België in de 19de eeuw* (Leuven, 1984), passim.

³⁷ Deneckere, *Geuzengeweld*, 87–98.

³⁸ Jean-Luc Soete, *Structures et organisations de base du parti catholique en Belgique* (Leuven, 1996), 485–8.

³⁹ Veronique Adriaens, *Liberalisme op het Zuid-Oostvlaamse platteland in de 19de eeuw* (Ghent, 1991), 32–4.

pubs and other leisure activities beyond its control. Now the Catholics created their own theatre companies, libraries, brass bands and cultural associations. The juxtaposition of the liberal Willemsfonds and the Catholic Davidsfonds is the best known, but the others were also based on the same divisive principle. Each association and each individual member had publicly to demonstrate his or her allegiance. A member of one association would never set foot in the headquarters of the other.⁴⁰ The conflict was also visible on the streets. The ultramontanes had no qualms about displaying their beliefs publicly and asserted the place of religion in public life through processions, pilgrimages, jubilees and other spectacular open-air events.⁴¹ The liberals for their part excelled at the tearing down of hostile symbols during carnival, the burning of effigies, attacks on the homes and meeting halls of opponents and the organisation of street protests. In 1871, when a government of liberal Catholics made some highly controversial appointments, the 1857 scenario was simply repeated. This time, however, there was no mistaking who was behind the massive anti-Catholic demonstrations: the progressives.⁴²

Private life – and death – were at the centre of the conflict over burials and cemeteries. The church controlled both the ritual and social conventions involved. Official burial sites had a legal status as sacred ground that fell under the authority of the clergy. Only Catholics could be interred in these spaces, as the burial of others would desecrate the site. The remains of non-Catholics were dumped in an outlying 'trou de chiens', or dog's hole, as the Catholics called it. As calls for civil burial became more urgent, free-thinking liberals aligned themselves with the labour movement and the democrats to challenge the status quo. *La Libre Pensée* was primarily created to deal with civil burials, including a lay ritual. Civil burials thus reinforced the non-Catholic identity. They were public, collective events, and when they involved the death of an eminent liberal, they were associated with big funeral processions and politically charged eulogies.⁴³

Catholics responded to these events with bitter hostility. They considered civil burials a scandal, an act of barbarism. Priests called from the pulpit for damnation, Catholic mayors refused to open the cemeteries, gravediggers refused to dig, zealots whistled and threw stones at funeral marches

⁴⁰ Art, 'Socio-cultureel leven in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden', 145–56; Jan Art, *Herders en parochianen. Kerkelijkheidsgegevens betreffende het bisdom Gent, 1830–1914* (Ghent, 1979), 98–100.

⁴¹ Wils, 'In het klimaat van de Kulturkampf', 172; Lode Wils, 'De katholieke partij in de 19de eeuw: organisatie, programma en aanhang', in Lamberts, *De kruistocht*, 70–5.

⁴² Deneckere, *Geuzengeweld*, 63–86; Philippe Van Tiggelen, 'Les émeutes de novembre 1871 à Bruxelles et la révocation du ministre d'Anethan', *Revue Belge d'Histoire Contemporaine* 15/1–2 (1984), 165–200.

⁴³ Witte, 'De Belgische Vrijdenkersorganisaties', 173–9.

as they passed through the streets.⁴⁴ And because the education of bourgeois daughters was primarily entrusted to Catholic schools and boarding schools, liberal families often found it hard to shrug off the authority of the clergy. Civil burial thus often led to traumatic rifts within the family. Free-thinker associations attempted to assist committed anti-Catholics in protecting themselves against their families by enabling such individuals to sign a special civil testament. These efforts notwithstanding, such burials remained extremely rare in the countryside and small towns. Tradition, religion and peer-group pressure were simply too strong. In larger cities, by contrast, civil burials were no longer marginal events by the late 1870s and the 1880s. In Brussels, about a quarter of burials were civil ceremonies.⁴⁵ And free-thinking associations gradually began to target other rituals as well. They organised a free-thinkers' 'youth celebration' to rival the first communion of the Catholics. They had their own flags, their own songs and their own floral emblem, the violet – *pensée* in French.⁴⁶

The consequence of these developments was a totally split society. The rift between Catholics and Liberals was evident, even in the privacy of a citizen's home. This divide within Belgian society would be further deepened and institutionalised by the 'school war' that broke out in 1879.

THE SCHOOL WAR (1879–1884)

Education was the crucial area of disagreement between the two sides and we should not be surprised to find that the battle over education during the years 1879–84 amounted to nothing less than ideological civil war. Up to that point, the church had more or less been able to achieve what it wanted. However, in the four major cities with Liberal majorities (Brussels, Antwerp, Liège and Ghent), a number of non-confessional schools had seen the light of day. Since 1859, the Liberal governments had also made several changes to the primary education law of 1842 in order to limit religious controls. The Catholics were on their guard.⁴⁷

The progressive liberals made it very clear that they sought to eliminate the Catholic dominance in education and to reconstitute it on the basis of their own very different rationalist ideology. According to their

⁴⁴ Ibid., Art, *Herders en parochianen*, 73–5.

⁴⁵ Report made to the communal council by the college of the lord mayor and the councillors, *Bulletin communal de la ville de Bruxelles* (Brussels, 1884), séance du 6 octobre 1884.

⁴⁶ Witte, 'De Belgische Vrijdenkersorganisaties', 173–95.

⁴⁷ Jacques Lory, *Libéralisme et instruction primaire, 1842–1879. Introduction à l'étude de la lutte scolaire en Belgique*, 2 vols. (Leuven, 1979) I, 207–8.

view, education was the platform for 'Bildung'. Schools should be temples of science and cornerstones of social mobility and increased political participation. Schools should also be instrumental in developing a sense of citizenship and political socialisation. Only the government could enforce the application of such principles and only the government could put an end to the church's stranglehold on educational programmes, textbooks and appointments. Religion had no place in a rational, secular education system. Reason, not religion, was the basis of universal morality. To propagate these views in the liberal world, the progressives created the *Ligue de l'Enseignement*, and somewhat later, the *Denier des Ecoles*. These two powerful organisations worked to develop the secular school system, tried to rein in the power of the church, and promoted the democratic goals of education. Both organisations were powerful pressure groups capable of shaping Liberal education policy. When the party returned to government in 1878, the education minister Pierre Van Humbeeck was determined to modernise, centralise and secularise primary and secondary education.⁴⁸

The moderate Liberals, however, toned down the progressive free-thinkers' agenda in two important areas. They did not want a full separation between state and religion. The neutral state still had to allow room for religious convictions, while at the same time guaranteeing the right to non-confessional education. Even in a neutral school, the prevailing morality was still inspired by Christianity, though no longer exclusively linked to Catholicism. The Liberals also limited the social scope of progressive demands. As a result, general compulsory education was not introduced. Nevertheless, new school bills of 1879 and 1881 did go some way towards meeting progressive expectations. They gave government more power at the cost of the church. Teachers were obliged to have official diplomas, science became the central touchstone of the curriculum and the state monopolised control over the educational process. Parents could ask for religious studies but they had to be taught outside of regular hours. Each municipality was obliged to maintain at least one neutral primary school.⁴⁹

The Catholics considered the 1879 primary education bill a declaration of war. They considered it an encroachment upon the church's fundamental right to preach Catholicism and an attack on the religious conviction of an overwhelming majority of the population. Catholic religion could under no circumstances be equated with, or, even worse, made subordinate to, other educational programmes and non-Catholic morals. The reaction was

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, I, 277–80, 379–90.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, II, 518–805.

immediate and extreme. Led by the bishops, the faithful were forbidden to send their children to public schools. Sunday prayers at services condemned the 'schools without God' and the bishops excommunicated anyone who backed public, neutral education: teachers, parents and students alike. The radicalism of this response opened gaps within the Catholic camp: both the moderate Catholics and the Vatican took the view that the bishops had pushed the issue too far.⁵⁰

Several local studies have shown how the system worked.⁵¹ Invective cascaded down from the pulpits and specialised preachers made the rounds of the parishes, not shrinking from the direst threats and abuse against those whose children were permitted to attend the non-denominational schools. 'Such parents deserve nothing better than to be drowned with a millstone around their necks', declared one priest in north-western Roeselare.⁵² A priest was no longer permitted to administer sacraments to or absolve suspect faithful. Weddings had to be celebrated without a mass, dead children had to be buried without receiving the full rites, pupils of non-denominational schools were forced to sit at the back of the church during holy communion: there are many examples of such moral terror. Not content with wielding religious and moral pressure, Catholic activists also targeted the opponent's wallet. Leaseholders were chased off their farms and priests forced the faithful to stay away from certain shops. In villages where the church still reigned supreme, such denunciations had far-reaching consequences. Thousands of teachers resigned from the public schools and their share of pupils dropped to barely 20 per cent of the total school population. In the countryside, many municipal schools stood empty.

The church always had one core strategy: if the state stemmed the spread of its influence in society, then the state had to be weakened and the church had to build on its own strengths. It used its formidable social authority during this conflict to creating its own education system. The bishops initiated a major campaign to found Catholic schools in as many municipalities as possible. They created special committees, meetings and their own *Denier des Ecoles Catholiques*, which proved a successful fundraiser. Catholic aristocracy, bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie came up with the funds or provided real estate. The results were impressive: in a mere five

⁵⁰ Jacques Lory, 'La résistance des catholiques belges à la loi du malheur', *Revue du Nord* 67 (1985), 731–2.

⁵¹ Ibid., 729–49; Jean-Luc Soete, 'La résistance catholique face à la loi Van Humbeeck dans l'arrondissement de Tournai', *Revue Belge d'Histoire Contemporaine* 11/1–2 (1980), 370–95; Jean-Marie Lermyte, *Voor de ziel van het kind. De schoolstrijd in het klerikale arrondissement Roeselare, 1878–1887* (Bruges, 1985).

⁵² Lermyte, *Voor de ziel van het kind*, 70.

years, 3,385 new Catholic schools were created. They quickly became the crucial power base for a massive reassertion of the church's influence over education. Processions and celebrations accompanied the inauguration of new schools. New school programmes, built around religion, decried the moral decay of contemporary society and denounced liberal heroes.⁵³

There was little the Liberals could do to counter this. Government measures against recalcitrant Catholic mayors, governors and civil servants merely provided fodder for Catholic propaganda. Efforts to exert pressure on Catholic leaseholders or parents working for liberal employers also had an adverse effect. When monks or Catholic schools were thrown out of official government buildings, angry mobs gathered. The state police killed two protesters near Kortrijk during such a stand-off, proof enough, perhaps, that the school war was just that.⁵⁴ The electoral campaign of 1884 was completely focused on the conflict. Bishops and priests went on the campaign trail. The creation of the Union Nationale pour le Redressement des Grievs (National Union for the Redressal of Grievances) improved co-operation between ultramontanes and liberal Catholics during the election campaign. This concerted Catholic offensive, coupled with public discontent over the high fiscal cost of state schooling, a controversial agrarian policy and progressive-conservative divisions within the Liberal Party, explains the landslide defeat of the Liberals in 1884.⁵⁵

Following the elections, a one-party Catholic government swept into power ready for revenge. It wanted to overturn the Liberal laws and turn back the clock. The Liberals fell back upon their municipal power base. The Brussels mayor Charles Buls called on his colleagues in the rapidly expanding Brussels conurbation, and created in concert with his Antwerp counterpart the Union of Municipalities. Some 200 municipalities joined a protest march that culminated in the massive 'school war' demonstration of 1884. The Liberals, and specifically the progressives among them, had become very skilful at organising mass protests. The liberal electoral associations – the Ligue, the Denier des Ecoles, and especially the Jeune Garde Libérale – mobilised the masses. They sent invitations (including train schedules) to liberal associations around the country and an organising committee saw to it that the demonstration ran smoothly. Flags, brass bands, slogans and protest songs were the hallmarks of such protest

⁵³ Soete, 'La résistance catholique', 140–3; Lermyte, *Voor de ziel van het kind*, 171–3; Lory, 'La résistance des catholiques', 740–5.

⁵⁴ Wils, 'In het klimaat van de Kulturkampf', 180.

⁵⁵ Emiel Lamberts and Jacques Lory (eds.), *1884: un tournant politique en Belgique* (Brussels, 1986), 9–44, 69–98, 201–7.

actions. Socialists also joined the march, increasing the cooperation between progressive liberals and the socialist left. After the Brussels march, other liberal cities also became involved.⁵⁶

The Catholics soon realised that the streets should not be left to the liberals alone and that each liberal demonstration had to be countered by a Catholic one. At an organisational level too, thanks to the energetic involvement of the Union Nationale, the Catholics were able to meet the liberals head-on. Appeals for mobilisation appeared in the press, telegrams were sent. All Christians were called upon to fulfil their spiritual obligations and save the souls of the children. The Catholics could count on even more brass bands than the liberals. Clusters of flags in which the national colours of Belgium alternated with the red banners of the Catholic church and the sound of the Belgian national anthem exemplify the church's efforts to associate Catholicism with the identity of the nation. Like the liberals, the Catholics brought some 6,000 demonstrators from all over the Belgian countryside to the capital. Although the demonstration coincided with the liberal one, the different routes they took ensured that there were no incidents.⁵⁷

Things turned out rather differently during a second, well-planned and massive demonstration through Brussels a few weeks later. This rally was conceived as a response to the second liberal mass demonstration of 31 August. It is worth dwelling in some detail on this Catholic rally of 7 September 1884, not only because it allows us to see how the phenomenon of collective action functioned in practice, but also because the events of Sunday 7 September reveal how violent the conflict had become, to the extent that a mood of civil war hung over the capital city.

'We will answer demonstration with demonstration. If we are attacked in the streets, we will know how defend ourselves in the street', the Union Nationale pour le Redressement des Griefs had announced beforehand.⁵⁸ The seriousness of Catholic intentions was evident from the elaborate preparations made for the rally. Together with the Brussels Association constitutionnelle et conservatrice the Union Nationale once again mobilised the Catholic population. Arthur Verhaegen, secretary of the Union Nationale, later compiled a detailed report in which he calculated that 1,352 parishes, nearly 100,000 demonstrators and 120 brass bands had been mobilised.⁵⁹ The demonstration was publicised beforehand as a celebratory

⁵⁶ Deneckere, *Geuzengeweld*, 99–110. ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 111–15.

⁵⁸ Circulaire de L'Union Nationale pour le Redressement des Griefs, in Arthur Verhaegen, *La manifestation nationale du 7 septembre 1884 à Bruxelles* (Ghent, 1885), 17.

⁵⁹ Verhaegen, *La manifestation*, 255–346.

occasion at which Catholics who had gathered to defend the faith against the rebellious, irreligious liberals would process before their king. Parliamentary deputies, senators, mayors, notables and priests called upon all Catholics to take the train to Brussels on that Sunday. The most massive response came from the Flemish Catholic rural areas. Catholic newspaper reports stressed the peaceful and civilised character of the protest, but not all Catholic demonstrators conformed to this image. In the police reports we read that the Catholics too hurled insults and threatened bystanders with sticks and clubs they had brought with them.⁶⁰ An officer had to prevent one group from urinating against the wall of a school. Demonstrators also urinated in the streets 'and deliberately exhibited their sexual parts, choosing in particular those places where women could be seen on the balconies of their apartments', wrote one officer. Even the Catholic minister Victor Jacobs was exasperated by 'the excesses of the Catholic side'.⁶¹

That the Catholics had converged on the city of Brussels in order to stage their protest was viewed by the liberals as an outright provocation. Since 1830, the liberals had seen Brussels as their centre and bastion, in which the values and symbols of liberalism were everywhere manifest. Monuments, buildings, street names, fountains and statues all symbolised the spirit of liberalism. As they saw it, this was their town and the Catholics should not claim otherwise by organising a protest march there. In 1871 the liberals had succeeded in chasing the Catholics out.⁶² 'Brussels had no intention of being trodden underfoot by thousands of clogs', wrote the liberal historian Frans Van Kalken in 1936,⁶³ thereby hinting at the deep-rooted opposition between the liberal city and the Catholic countryside and at the hostility with which many citizens of the town greeted Catholic demonstrators. The liberal counter-demonstration of 7 September was well planned. Preparations took place within the Associations libérales of the city and greater Brussels, in various other liberal groupings (especially the Jeunes Gardes Libérales), in the schools, in the university, in liberal cafés and within individual families. Police arrest records suggest that the most militant counter-demonstrators tended mainly to come from the middle classes.⁶⁴ But the mobilisation also extended beyond the boundaries of Brussels. Thousands of whistles had been sold during the previous week

⁶⁰ Extracts from police reports, in *Bulletin de la ville de Bruxelles*, 167–75.

⁶¹ *Annales parlementaires*, Sénat, 1884, 69.

⁶² Van Tiggelen, 'Les émeutes de novembre 1871', 165–200.

⁶³ Frans Van Kalken, *Les commotions populaires en Belgique, 1834–1902* (Brussels, 1936), 70–1.

⁶⁴ Deneckere, *Geuzengeweld*, 121; Luc Keunings, 'Le maintien de l'ordre en 1884', in Lamberts and Lory, *1884: un tournant politique*, 120.

and distributed on the eve of the demonstration by the Jeunes Gardes. Stocks of blue powder had been bought out by people who planned to pelt the Catholic demonstrators with it (blue was the colour of the Liberals).⁶⁵ All the other symbols had been placed in readiness: blue flags, blue cornflowers in button-holes, blue clothing for the women, a number of black dolls representing the hated priests, the chanted insults: 'À bas les rouges' (red was the colour of the Catholics), 'Vivent les bleus', 'À bas Malou', 'Malou la corde au cou' (Malou was the most prominent Catholic minister at the time), songs recalling the Dutch struggle for independence from Catholic Spain, and the parody of a funeral march. A considerable number of the counter-demonstrators – around 1,500 according to contemporary estimates – were armed with sticks and clubs. This hard core had even assembled at a specific position along the route in order to smash up the demonstration: in the area of the Stock Exchange the passage was narrow and the attackers could easily disappear into the maze of adjoining streets. It was the youth organisations that gave the go-ahead using a pre-arranged signal.⁶⁶

From half past ten on this sunny Sunday morning, the Catholic demonstrators poured from the three railway stations into the centre of the capital city. An immense sea of human beings gathered with countless brass bands, masses of national and red flags, red poppies and green and red ribbons. Along the route, there were large liberal crowds who had gathered in order to subject the Catholics to salvos of insults or a deafening concert of whistles. Just at the point where the procession reached the Stock Exchange building, the black dolls were hoisted, scraps of blue paper rained down, the protesters were inundated with blue powder, and a sea of sticks and cudgels could be seen. A few hundred counter-demonstrators attempted to bring the demonstration to a standstill. The flags and posters of the Catholic associations were torn apart, musical instruments smashed and the skins of various bass drums pierced through. Heavy blows were meted out and the hundreds of wounded were carried out of the street into the Stock Exchange or the Town Hall. The confrontation continued for some four hours.⁶⁷

The forces of order in the city stood by, powerless to intervene. In order to avoid a bloodbath and civil war, the mayor Charles Buls had decided not to deploy the army. He had not foreseen such serious conflict and he

⁶⁵ Keunings, 'Le maintien de l'ordre', 112, 115, 122.

⁶⁶ Deneckere, *Geuzengeweld*, 118–22; Keunings, 'Le maintien de l'ordre', 119–23.

⁶⁷ Deneckere, *Geuzengeweld*, 117–22.

lacked the manpower to put an end to it. His own forces had secretly been advised that they were not to make use of their weapons and were to occupy themselves above all with making arrests.⁶⁸ The Catholic demonstrators pulled back en masse towards the stations, which had been placed under protection on the orders of the minister of the interior. Only a few hundred actually reached the Royal Palace that was to have been the destination of the protest march.⁶⁹

It goes without saying that this 'Saint Bartholomew's Day of the big drums' as the liberals dubbed the events of 7 September 1884, aroused considerable public consternation, not only in Belgium, but also in the foreign press.⁷⁰ The Catholics spoke of a conspiracy organised by the lodges and wanted Buls to be dismissed from his post. The government did not comply. It had resolved not to allow itself to be influenced by the street and to persevere undisturbed in its legislative work.

The hard-liners in the Catholic government still hoped to push Catholic revenge bills through parliament. Change came only after the progressives, the radical liberals and the socialists started targeting the king, raising fears of a republican plot. But the law proposed by the Catholic hard-liners was widely perceived as extremist, with the result that the Liberal Party had little difficulty in winning the following municipal elections. The king now intervened and dismissed the two most radical Catholic ministers, Charles Woeste and Victor Jacobs. The more moderate Catholic government that followed took the edges off the revenge policy.⁷¹

The school war had far-reaching consequences. It was the Catholics who emerged stronger from this bruising battle, especially in an organisational sense. They would remain in power until the First World War. The anti-Catholic policy left the Liberal Party in total disarray; the influence they had wielded in Belgian politics now appeared permanently broken. The conflict areas that were to dominate Belgian policies over the next decades had come to the surface. The friction between the Catholic, primarily Flemish, countryside and the socialist urban, industrial areas that were primarily located in Wallonia came to the fore. Possibly even more than before, Brussels itself became a controversial issue for the Catholics and they opposed its further expansion. Moreover, the school war had promoted the street as an integral part of extra-parliamentary protest action. The school

⁶⁸ Keunings, 'Le maintien de l'ordre', 115, 121–30.

⁶⁹ Deneckere, *Geuzengeweld*, 118–21. ⁷⁰ Van Kalken, *Les commotions populaires*, 70–2.

⁷¹ Jean Stengers, 'Léopold II et le cabinet Malou (juin–octobre 1884)' in Lamberts and Lory, 1884: *un tournant politique*, 151–77.

war not only marked the end of an era, but also the beginning of a new one. The campaign to expand democracy to include ever larger swathes of the population was about to start. As this process advanced, the social rift would gradually push the Catholic–anticlerical divide into the background, and even absorb it to a certain extent.

The school war had given the Catholics and the anticlerical movement a new and important battleground. School came to determine which world one belonged to. The stark choices and opposed commitments involved in the school war widened the rift between the two worlds. On both sides, the conflict had a mobilising, disciplining effect, reinforcing old habits and intensifying the sense of solidarity. Those teachers who had lost their jobs because of the Catholic law could count on widespread sympathy among liberals. The Ligue, the masonic lodges and other liberal associations supported them financially. And within educational circles, where many victims of the law were concentrated, anticlericalism became a matter of professional ethics.⁷² Many people severed all links with the church. Attendance at services and religious burials both declined dramatically. And, for the first time, this phenomenon also spread to the countryside. Even there, the school war pushed the conflict beyond the purely political. Everywhere it generated new religious-philosophical conflicts or brought others back to the surface. These included quarrels over the use of church bells, the display of religious symbols in courthouses and cemeteries, the participation of politicians and military officials in official Te Deums, and the observance of Lent.⁷³ After the school war, countless families broke entirely with the church, thus ensuring that succeeding generations would maintain anticlerical feelings. All the contentious issues that had marked the period 1857–84 continued to be a fact of daily life in the years that followed. Together with the anti-Catholic strain within the Socialist Party, anticlericalism became one of the dominant features of Belgian society. The resulting rift split the whole of society and would not be bridged until the later twentieth century.

⁷² André Uyttenbroeck, 'Une conséquence de la loi Jacobs (20 septembre 1884): la création d'écoles libres laïques', in *Ligue de l'Enseignement. La Ligue de l'Enseignement et la défense de l'école publique avant 1914* (Brussels, 1986), 75–88.

⁷³ Adriaens, *Liberalisme*, 55–82; Art, *Herders en parochianen*, 77, 101–06; Lory, 'La résistance des catholiques', 738; Karel Velle, 'De klokkenkwestie in België in de 19de eeuw: een bijdrage tot de cultuure en politieke geschiedenis van het platteland', *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* 75/2 (1997), 343–82; Emiel Lamberts, 'De kerkhovenkwestie', in *L'initiative publique des communes en Belgique, 1795–1940. Colloque international, 1984. Actes*, 2 vols. (Brussels, 1986), II, 785–92; André Miroir, 'Le sabre, le goupillon et la constitution. Réflexions sur le concours des autorités civiles et militaires aux cérémonies religieuses', in Guy Cambier (ed.), vol. VIII of *Problèmes d'histoire du christianisme*, 19 vols. (Brussels, 1970–89), 107–37.

CONCLUSIONS

Belgium's culture war followed an era of political bargaining between Catholics and liberals, and this undoubtedly had an impact on the conflict. The transition from compromise to open conflict took place in phases of successively heightened intensity, but there was no single defining event that set off the explosion between the two sides. As of 1831, the church had come to terms with the moderate liberals; in Belgium, the conflict between the church and the modern nation was settled in a spirit of compromise. In this sense, although there were certainly parallels with developments in other European nations, comparisons with Germany, Spain or Italy are problematic.

The battle started soon enough; indeed it preceded the culmination of the Roman question in Italy. As early as 1857, the first scuffles brought the masses into the street. This striking precocity can be explained by the fact that economic liberalism had already reached its zenith in Belgium by the middle of the century, closely followed by cultural and political liberalism. These developments had a profound impact on attitudes within the middle class. The radical anticlerical variant of mid-century liberalism intensified opposition against the Catholic project.

The culture war was a conflict among citizens and largely remained within parliamentary boundaries. Violence and repression were limited, especially if we compare these conflicts with the deadly suppression of the Belgian labour revolts. The parliamentary system was exploited to the fullest extent, but innovative use was also made of other instruments of public opposition – petitions, municipal elections and so on. Street action was deployed to compensate for the representational limits of the electoral system. It allowed citizens who were denied a vote in the polling booth to become part of the opposition. Only a few radical groups used such demonstrations for revolutionary aims.

Compared to some other countries, the conflict in Belgium was straightforward. On the religious side, the Catholic church controlled everything. Some liberal families were Protestant, but there were far too few of them to have an impact. Yet the presence of these Protestant families, together with other religious groups, did suffice to weaken the positivist ideology of the progressive liberals. On the clerical side, too, the moderate, liberal Catholics kept the ultramontane excesses in check. This division on both sides initially kept the conflict from boiling over. Yet as the radicals on both sides got the upper hand, the clash could no longer be contained.

The radicals were responsible for the conflict of 1879–84. The positivist free-thinkers forced the Liberal government to go a long way down the road towards a secular society. This in turn allowed the militant ultramontanes to sideline the moderate Catholic parliamentarians. The French minister Jules Ferry would not make the same mistake; he took a much more cautious approach and gradually turned France into a rationalist secular state.⁷⁴

In France and the Netherlands, the creation of a secular and of a democratic society would go hand in hand around the turn of the century.⁷⁵ In Belgium however, the expansion of parliamentary democracy occurred under the rule of one-party Catholic governments, and left a distinct religious imprint on all social, political and cultural areas. In the Netherlands, there was cooperation with the progressive liberals and the socialists, but in Belgium, there was no need for a spirit of compromise. This only reinforced anticlericalism and helps to explain why, after 1884, the clerical–secular cleavage became a fact of life that would keep Belgian society divided until well into the twentieth century.

⁷⁴ Jeffrey Tyssens, 'Onderwijsconflict en – pacificatie vanuit een comparatief perspectief: België, Nederland, Frankrijk', in Witte, De Groof and Tyssens, *Het Schoolpact van 1958*, 55.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 48, 55–8.

CHAPTER 5

Contested rituals and the battle for public space: the Netherlands

Peter Jan Margry and Henk te Velde

INTRODUCTION

'Zurück!' (Stand back!) shouted Pastor Quaedvlieg, a priest from the Prussian border town of Haaren, when he and the members of his procession were brought to a halt by three Dutch national policemen in the autumn of 1878.¹ Only shortly before, he and his pilgrims, returning from the important Marian shrine of Our Lady in 't Zand near Roermond in the southern Dutch province of Limburg, had formed a liturgical procession. Quaedvlieg had donned his chasuble in a field, brought out the processional cross and unfurled the liturgical processional banners. Then he had directed the forming of ranks: first two columns of women, then himself in the middle, then two columns of men, and finally the train, consisting of three covered wagons with baggage. In doing this he was deliberately taking a risk; since the beginning of the *Kulturkampf* in Prussia, the rules relating to public religious rituals had also been sharpened in Dutch Limburg, and throughout the Netherlands the holding of religious rituals in public had become an extremely sensitive issue. Of the eleven provinces of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, only the two most southern, North Brabant and Limburg, had Catholic majorities. Of the 230,000 inhabitants of Limburg, about 99 per cent were Catholic. From 1830 to 1839 Limburg had belonged to the newly formed Belgium, and until the 1860s it was part of both the Netherlands and the German *Bund*. Because this province had an entirely different history from other regions of the Netherlands, there was a greater leeway here for the public observance of religion by Catholics.

Quaedvlieg, however, went further than even the Limburg situation permitted. He knocked the gloves off one of the policemen who attempted

¹ For the particulars of this case, see Peter Jan Margry, *Teedere Quaesties: religieuze rituelen in conflict. Confrontaties tussen katholieken en protestanten rond de processiecultuur in 19^e-eeuws Nederland* (Hilversum, 2000), 317–22; *Maas- en Roerbode*, 21 and 28 September 1878 nos. 38, 39; J. L. J. Schmitz, 'Deutsche Wallfahrten nach Roermond und die "Prozessionen-Jagd"', *Heimatkalendar des Kreises Heinsberg* 1985' (Erkelenz o. J.) 98–104, here 101.

Het processierecht in Limburg.



Nieuwste wijze van vereeren van Onze Lieve Vrouwe.

Figure 4 Clash between German pilgrims and Dutch authorities, from the liberal journal *Uilenspiegel*, 28 September 1878. The Dutch caption reads 'The latest way of venerating Our Lady'. The title reads: 'The right to hold processions in Limburg'.

to stop the procession, and then about twenty of the male pilgrims broke loose from the group, shouting 'lay into them, cut them down', attacking the police with sticks and umbrellas. Drawing their swords, the police made a narrow escape. They were forced to leave one of their number bleeding from a head wound in a nearby inn at Schöndeln while they went off to fetch reinforcements in Roermond. The lieutenant and his brigadier, accompanied by eight men and this time armed with pistols, caught up with the pilgrims again about ninety minutes later at the hamlet of Voorst, close to the Prussian border. With the border in sight, however, the procession took to its heels, and sought to escape behind a volley of stones. A group of about 100 people was isolated, including the lay organiser; by this time Pastor Quaadvlieg had already disappeared across the border. About ten "activists" were arrested and carted off to Roermond, handcuffed together. Nine pilgrims were later sentenced by a judge to periods of imprisonment

ranging from one month to a year.² The pastor was later found guilty of violating the ban on processions.

THE DUTCH SITUATION

The violent afternoon of 15 September 1878 is part of a remarkably turbulent period in Dutch history.³ It was one of the last confrontations in a long conflict over public religious rituals that revived in the Netherlands at the beginning of the nineteenth century and reached its climax in the 1870s. The year 1878 was the culmination of a concerted official campaign against processions that, in part influenced by the German *Kulturkampf*, had been gaining pace since 1873. Under this policy, notwithstanding the country's long tradition of tolerance, pilgrims were stopped at the Prussian border or even forced back across it with violence.

The incident near Roermond is an episode from the Dutch culture wars of the period. The title of this book uses the plural, and this is certainly appropriate for the situation in the Netherlands. While the German *Kulturkampf* was primarily a struggle between the state and the Catholic church or Catholic community, the conflict in the Netherlands turned mainly on the opposition between Catholics and Protestants. Yet there was a certain similarity in general terms between the Prussian/German situation and the Dutch. In both cases there was a Protestant majority and a considerable Catholic minority – in both cases slightly over a third of the population.⁴ Of the Dutch population of about 3.6 million in 1870, about 2 million were Reformed (55 per cent) and 1,310,000 were Roman Catholic (36.5 per cent); the rest consisted of other Protestants, Jews and a very small group of unchurched persons.⁵

Despite the general similarity in the size of the Catholic minority, the course of the Dutch '*Kulturkampf*' was different from that in Germany. The Dutch government was rather more restrained and the conduct of the Catholic minority was more tentative and cautious. Perhaps for these

² The affair is described in the *procès-verbal*; see *Weekblad van het regt* no. 4327 (1879), 2–3; see also the *Courrier de la Meuse*, 28 September 1878 no. 225, 2 October 1878, no. 230, 4 October 1878, no. 230 and Giel Hutschemaekers, 'Limburgse processieperikelen 1873–1880', *De Maasgouw* 99 (1980), 117–27, 184–208, here 192–3.

³ In vernacular Dutch, the idea of a bedlam is proverbially expressed as 'het ging er pruisisch aan toe' – 'things got Prussian'.

⁴ Pieter de Coninck, 'De natie in pacht. Katholieke minderheid, liberale onderwijspolitiek en natievorming in Duitsland en Nederland tijdens de jaren 1870', in Henk te Velde and Hans Verhage (eds.), *De eenheid en de delen. Zuilvervorming, onderwijs en natievorming in Nederland 1850–1900* (Amsterdam, 1996), 57–83, elaborates on the comparison.

⁵ H. H. Knippenberg, *De religieuze kaart van Nederland* (Assen, 1992), *passim*.

reasons, little attention has been paid in histories of the nineteenth-century Netherlands to the conflict between Catholics and the state. The accent has traditionally been laid on the rise of a liberal parliamentary system with a fully constitutional monarchy as a result of the constitutional revisions of 1848, and the emancipatory struggle, first of orthodox Protestants and Catholics, and later, at the end of the century, of Socialists. This three-fold struggle for emancipation resulted, it is generally assumed, in the twentieth-century Dutch model of 'consociational democracy', where minorities tolerated each other and had to work together to keep government running smoothly.

It has been clear for a very long time that the Catholic minority in the Netherlands always took very cautious positions at the national level, and never really demanded the public role to which its numbers would have entitled it. This led to the paradoxical situation of the twentieth century, when Catholics were given a central role in national politics – from 1918, when the first Catholic prime minister was appointed, until 1994, the Catholics were part of virtually every government – but remained subordinate (until the 1960s at least) to the liberals and Protestants in society.⁶ It can thus be said that the Catholics have long acquiesced in a culture of repressive tolerance. They were tolerated by the liberal-Protestant establishment as long as they did not make waves. This culture also prevailed in the nineteenth century, with the result that, to all appearances, little repression was necessary. The image of peaceful religious development is all the more prevalent because all parties had their sights set on emancipation at the national level, and at that level violent religious clashes were rare. It is, as we will demonstrate, only local investigation that can really lay bare the nature of the religious conflict. For that reason, our aim in this chapter is twofold. We intend, firstly, to show that a fiercer conflict raged in the localities than at the national level of parliamentary representation in The Hague. Secondly, we will be seeking an explanation for the in part only apparent moderation of the Dutch culture wars and for the very careful attitude of the Catholic elite in the national context.

As we have said, in the Netherlands it was really the culture war between Catholics and Protestants that was central. In the nineteenth century not only the Protestants themselves but also foreign observers considered the Netherlands to be a Protestant country.⁷ It is true that there was a considerable Catholic minority, but for centuries it had been accustomed to

⁶ L. J. Rogier, *Het verschijnsel der culturele inertie bij de Nederlandse katholieken* (Amsterdam, 1958).

⁷ See, for instance, G. J. Schutte, *Het Calvinistisch Nederland. Mythe en werkelijkheid* (Hilversum, 2000).

keeping a low profile, and until the middle of the nineteenth century it had no internal organisation. Only the liberal constitutional reforms of 1848 effected a thorough separation of church and state that gave the Catholic church the freedom to organise itself as it wished. Not until then could the Catholic episcopal hierarchy be reintroduced on Dutch territory. In 1853, in somewhat provocative terms, the pope announced the installation of a number of bishops in the Netherlands. This measure placed the system of repressive tolerance under considerable strain. The Catholics were asserting themselves and demanding their place in the nation. The consequence was a fierce Protestant reaction in the form of the April Movement, centred in Utrecht, the city which was to become the seat of the archbishop. Protestant resistance spread like wildfire throughout the country. In the spectrum of Charles Tilly's repertoires of contention, this resistance fell somewhere between the old forms of direct action and the new forms of political protest.⁸ Protestant clergy protested from the pulpit, a petition was sent to the king (although officially, under the new constitution, he no longer had any direct involvement with ministerial responsibilities), Catholic stores were boycotted, Catholic workers were fired from their jobs, the homes of Catholics were painted with slogans, and Catholic clergy were intimidated.⁹ Although the introduction of the Catholic hierarchy eventually went through without disruption, the April Movement had a substantial effect. Within several months, as a kind of compensation to the offended Protestants, the government enacted the law on church denominations, which placed further restrictions on processions. Over the longer term, this new assertiveness on the part of the Catholic clergy was nipped in the bud; it would not revive until around 1900, though even then Catholics would continue to exercise caution, so as not to provoke a return to the 'no popery' excitement of 1853.¹⁰

In the shorter term, the antipathies awakened by these events led to the fall of the Liberal cabinet of Prime Minister Johan Rudolf Thorbecke. It became clear that there was a large gap between the Liberal parliament, the *pays légal*, and the world outside it, the primarily Protestant *pays réel*. While the parliament primarily concerned itself with the constitution and the organisation of the state, the religious issue was the foremost concern of

⁸ Charles Tilly, *The Contentious French* (Cambridge, Mass., 1986), 386–98; Charles Tilly, *Popular Contention in Great Britain 1758–1834* (Cambridge, Mass., 1995), 41–8.

⁹ Among other sources, A. J. Bronkhorst, *Rondom 1853. De invoering der Rooms-Katholieke hiërarchie. De April-Beweging* (The Hague, 1953), 67–8.

¹⁰ J. P. de Valk, *Roomser dan de paus? Studies over de betrekkingen tussen de Heilige Stoel en het Nederlands katholicisme, 1815–1940* (Nijmegen, 1998), 172, 347–8.

the population. In the parliament the primary opposition was that between Conservatives and Liberals; in the country the principal difference was that between Protestants and Catholics. It is true that the constitutional revisions of 1848 had strengthened the position of the ministers and parliament, but there was still a very limited franchise, and there was a great distance between the distinguished liberal lawyers of the Lower House in The Hague and the mass of the people who did not get excited about the constitution. Even the limited group to whom the franchise did extend – an elite, in other words – looked first at the religious background of the candidate when voting, and only thereafter at his political standpoint.¹¹

In the half-century after 1853 the Catholic elite tried to win a place in national politics. To secure this, however, they had to observe considerable circumspection so as to spare Protestant sensibilities. Ordinary Catholic churchgoers became increasingly self-confident and occasionally acted more assertively than the higher clergy, but this did not generally feed through into national politics. There were signs of a change in 1872. This was the three-hundredth anniversary year of the capture of Den Briel, a major event in the history of the sixteenth-century Dutch Revolution, and a high point for the Protestants in their struggle against Catholic Spain. It was a national commemorative celebration, but Catholics were understandably not very enthusiastic about it. Catholic leaders opposed the event, but did not go beyond verbal protests, a civilised polemic. Locally, however, the conflict sometimes took on a very different face. When Catholics refused to hang out flags on the occasion, they were beaten up, their furniture was destroyed, or they had their windows smashed. But in a number of places with a large Catholic population, it was the Catholics who went on the offensive. In large parts of the Catholic south of the country, the population simply did not observe the festivities, and houses that were flying the national flag were sometimes destroyed.¹²

These incidents made a considerable impression. As contemporary accounts make clear, the contours of national politics had shifted. Whereas the organs of the liberal press had often sided with the Catholics against the popular Protestant fury in 1853, they now turned against ultramontane Catholicism. Some liberals, though not many, now pointed to Bismarck's

¹¹ See Ron de Jong, *Van standspolitiek naar partijloyaliteit. Verkiezingen voor de Tweede Kamer 1848–1887* (Hilversum, 1999).

¹² Frans Groot, 'Papists and Beggars: National Festivals and Nation Building in the Netherlands during the Nineteenth Century', in Peter van der Veer and Hartmut Lehmann (eds.), *Nation and Religion. Perspectives on Europe and Asia* (Princeton, 1999), 161–77; Frans Groot, 'De strijd rond Alva's bril. Papen en geuzen bij de herdenking van de inname van Den Briel, 1572–1872', *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 110 (1995), 161–81.

policies vis-à-vis Catholicism as a model to be emulated in the Netherlands. On 17 November, six months after the anniversary celebration, the Lower House suddenly adopted a Liberal motion abolishing the Dutch embassy to the Holy See.¹³ This gesture, which deeply offended the Catholics and further alienated them from the Liberals, was a sign of advancing polarisation. It appeared that the rules of Dutch politics had been rewritten. Until the 1860s, there had been an alliance between the Liberals, who championed the separation of church and state, and the Catholics, who wished to profit from the freedom that this arrangement provided. The shift began with the *Syllabus errorum* in 1864, which labelled liberalism as an enemy, followed in the Netherlands itself in 1868 by the episcopate's unconditional support for Catholic elementary schools, which placed them in opposition to the confessionally neutral state-supported education promoted by the liberals. While orthodox Protestants and Catholics were still letting fly at each other in the streets in 1872, in national politics their interests had begun to converge. Both groups wanted a larger role for religion in elementary education, and rejected the Liberal attitudes toward education.

The opposition between confessional groups and the Liberals reached its high point during the left-Liberal cabinet of Johan Kappeyne van de Coppello, 1877–9. Kappeyne introduced a Liberal education law that established higher qualitative criteria for elementary education, but which did not provide subsidies to enable church-related schools to meet them. It thus became more expensive and more difficult for confessional elementary education to continue operating. Both Catholics and orthodox Protestants called Kappeyne the 'Dutch Bismarck' and spoke of oppression. Histories written from confessional viewpoints cast him as a foe who had to be resisted by Catholics and orthodox Protestants alike. Under closer examination, it appears that his policy on education was not as extreme as this suggests. Indeed, editorial writers in confessional newspapers at the time of the law proposals were aware of this and passed milder judgements. Kappeyne himself was a principled Liberal who deeply valued neutral state-sponsored education, and certainly had no inclination toward oppression. As a legal historian and lawyer, he prized the constitutional state above all else; as an advocate he had provided legal counsel to orthodox Protestants, and had even defended Catholics in the courts. Viewed from this perspective, the 'Dutch *Kulturkampf*' was thus to some extent an invention by those confessional forces that had an interest in conjuring up a sharply

¹³ J. H. J. M. Witlox, *De staatkundige emancipatie van Nederlands katholieken 1848–1870* (Hilversum, 1969) 408–17.

defined enemy for the purpose of rallying and organising their followers. The confessional groups were becoming better organised around 1870, and they demonised Kappeyne and 'his' *Kulturkampf* in order better to stake out their own ground.¹⁴

Still, in some areas the Dutch culture wars were certainly virulent. In order to see this, however, we need to shift our focus away from the national to the local level, from the milieu of the senior clergy to that of the parish priests and ordinary churchgoers. The focus of the most intense confrontation was not that perennial issue in modern Dutch history, the school question, but the local conflicts over the public manifestation of religion in processions and other public rituals.¹⁵ In national politics the Catholic elite had every reason to position themselves carefully in order not to taint their alliance with orthodox Protestants and end up in a vulnerable minority position. But the public manifestation of religion at the local level was an entirely different matter. It was here that the sharpest confrontations took place between a liberal and Protestant (and also anti-papal) desire for a neutral public space in which religion would not be visible, and a new Catholic self-confidence that aspired to manifest itself precisely on the street, through various kinds of public performance. While there was an increasingly confident and ebullient mood among Catholics, liberals and Protestants felt increasingly anxious at the prospect of Catholic dominance in the southern localities.

In the meantime, ultramontane views had begun to gain ground in the Netherlands, further feeding the fears of Protestants, who vigilantly followed developments within the Catholic church. The spectre of an international Jesuit network devoted to increasing the might of Rome and orchestrating new shrines, cloisters and organised pilgrimages haunted the Netherlands.¹⁶ Nor did the phenomenal expansion of the Marian shrine at Lourdes go unnoticed in the Netherlands. In one of her visitations, the visionary Bernadette Soubirous had received the commission to have the priests of the world organise processions and pilgrimages.¹⁷ For this reason, Lourdes became something of a bugbear for liberal and Protestant circles

¹⁴ On this whole discussion, see Pieter de Coninck, 'Een les uit Pruisen. Nederland en de Kulturkampf, 1870-1880' (Ph.D. dissertation, Rijksuniversiteit Leiden, 1998) and Henk te Velde, 'Kappeyne tegen Kuyper of de principes van het politieke spel', in Te Velde and Verhage, *De eenheid en de delen*, 121-33.

¹⁵ The standard work on Dutch history, Ernst H. Kossmann, *The Low Countries 1780-1940* (Oxford, 1978), deals at various points with the school conflict, but does not mention the issue of processions; regarding that, see Margry, *Teedere Quaesties*.

¹⁶ In relation to France, see Geoffrey Cubitt, *The Jesuit Myth. Conspiracy Theory and Politics in Nineteenth-Century France* (Oxford, 1993).

¹⁷ Ruth Harris, *Lourdes. Body and Spirit in the Secular Age* (London, 1999), 7.

in the Netherlands – all the more so with the creation of successful branch shrines, such as that at Oostakker, in Belgium, and the great new Marian site that sprang up from nothing in the German town of Marpingen in 1876, which immediately became a reference point for Dutch priests and Catholics.¹⁸

In contrast to Vatican I (1869–70) and the dogma of papal infallibility pronounced there, which caused relative little to-do in the Netherlands, it was the 1871 celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the ascension of Pope Pius IX to the Holy See that was a catalyst for the growing self-confidence of Catholics. This anniversary was also the occasion for the first national Catholic public gathering of a political character, and throughout the country the festivities and street decorations led to polarisation and confrontations.¹⁹

It was in the Catholic southern provinces of Limburg and North Brabant that the ultramontane movement received its greatest stimulus. While the declaration of papal infallibility had hardly any impact in the rest of the Netherlands, its effects in Limburg were dramatic.²⁰ How strongly Limburg was influenced by the papal cult can be seen in the fact that in various churches the parishioners had a statue of the pope placed on the altar, 'before which there was genuflection, as before a saint'.²¹ Loyal Catholic Limburgers were deeply stirred by the polemics in the newspapers and the activity of their parish priests, and their outlook became more and more ultramontane, in conformity with the *Syllabus errorum*. So encompassing was this subjection to papal authority that, in the eyes of many liberals, loyal Catholics could only be regarded in a secondary sense as citizens of a free state.²² In 1873, the Limburg provincial authorities reported to the minister of home affairs that in addition to events outside the country, it was chiefly the 'driving' of the regular and secular clergy that was 'grooming' the mass of Catholics to adopt ultramontane convictions. There were special processions organised to the 'Dutch' pilgrimage site of Kevelaer – just across the German border – with the goal of averting the 'liberal danger', and mass meetings and semi-religious events were organised. In Münster, close to the Dutch border, 27,000 Catholics came together to display their loyalty to

¹⁸ Ibid., 343–5; David Blackbourn, *Marpingen. Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (New York, 1994), 134.

¹⁹ De Valk, *Roomser dan de paus*, 145; Margry, *Teedere Quaesties*, 369.

²⁰ De Coninck, 'Een les uit Pruisen', 58–61; P. J. H. Ubachs, *Handboek voor de geschiedenis van Limburg* (Hilversum, 2000), 390–1.

²¹ De Coninck, 'Een les uit Pruisen', 54.

²² Maastricht, Limburgs Archief, provinciaal bestuur, inv. nr. 575, report on 1871, 30 March 1871, no. 65.

the bishop there.²³ It was in this ultramontane Catholic milieu in Limburg that the conflict surrounding processions would reach its climax in the 1870s.

THE 'PROCESSION QUESTION' IN MAASTRICHT, LIMBURG AND THE NETHERLANDS

The procession question ultimately goes back to a ban on public acts of Catholic worship that was instituted in the Dutch Republic during the Reformation.²⁴ The Netherlands has never really had a state church, but during the Republic (from the end of the sixteenth to the end of the eighteenth century), the Calvinist Reformed church was dominant, while a blind eye was turned to Catholicism. After the brief liberalisation of the revolutionary period (1795–1813), the reorganised Reformed church remained the dominant church in the new kingdom under Willem I. There was still no state church as such, but the king attached considerable value to a strong civil religion, and was of the opinion that undogmatic Protestantism could best fulfil that role. The bourgeois, free-thinking Protestant elite supported him in this and collectively turned against public expressions of both orthodox Protestantism and Catholicism. The first constitution of the new kingdom after the period of French domination, in 1814, had left open the possibility of holding processions and pilgrimages. However, the growing desire among Catholics to practise their public rituals as a 'natural right' collided with the political culture of Willem I's centralised kingdom, in which public space and public life were seen as 'neutral' terrain, where religion must not be visible.

The early emancipation of the Catholics and their increasing public visibility were therefore the impetus for new legislation limiting public religious observance.²⁵ The problems surrounding ritual displays – from the ringing of church bells and bringing the *viaticum* to homes and funeral processions, to full-scale processions and group pilgrimages – increased rapidly during the first half of the nineteenth century. Among these, the procession,

²³ Jonathan Sperber, *Popular Catholicism in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Princeton, 1984), 210–14, 223–4.

²⁴ Cf. Peter van Rooden, 'History, the Nation, and Religion. The Transformations of the Dutch Religious Past', in Peter van der Veer and Hartmut Lehmann (eds.), *Nation and Religion. Perspectives on Europe and Asia* (Princeton, 1999), 96–111.

²⁵ The most important step in the limiting of public Catholic rituals was the enactment of the constitution of 1848, which on the one hand made possible the episcopal hierarchy, but which at the same time contained a ban on public processions. The 1853 law on church denominations developed this further, making the ban stricter and more general, and setting out penalties.

with its powerful symbolic function and demonstrative attributes such as processional crosses, banners and torches, was the most serious bone of contention. The very spectacle of the religious procession awakened the fear that the cleansing of the sacral landscape that had taken place during the Reformation would be reversed. Although the 'appeasement law' of 1853 was a thorn in the side for Catholics, its general ban on clergy appearing in public places in vestments successfully repressed public rituals throughout most of the Netherlands, and for almost two decades there was relative calm on the issue. This calm was only disrupted when, at the time of the German *Kulturkampf*, a 'national' procession conflict broke out in Maastricht, the capital of Limburg.

In 1870, Maastricht had about 28,000 residents, almost all Catholics, but represented by a relatively strong liberal elite.²⁶ The city became embroiled in a local culture war. Factions coalesced around two key political figures, the Catholic industrialist Petrus Regout and the Liberal Catholic councillor and burgomaster (mayor) W. H. Pijls. Regout had distanced himself from the Liberals after they had succeeded in preventing his re-election to parliament, and as a consequence of this local antagonism, he aligned himself with the ultramontane clerical camp. As well as these local players, the governor of Limburg, Pieter van der Does de Willebois, an energetic liberal and moderately anticlerical Catholic from outside the province, also played an important role. He found the influence of the clergy on social life too great, and distanced himself from public rituals such as processions.²⁷

However, the governor could not ignore St Servas († 384), the patron saint and first bishop of Maastricht. During the Middle Ages, pilgrims from across Europe had come every seven years for his jubilee and the display of his relics.²⁸ But since the capture of Maastricht by the Dutch Republic in 1632, the city, like the rest of the Republic, had been 'purified' of Catholic rituals, and the jubilee celebration was forbidden to take to the streets. In the nineteenth century this saint became an important symbol for the whole province of Limburg, and was a definitive element in the identity of the Catholic community. Thus, as a rule, the governor was also present for the annual celebration of St Servas's feast.

²⁶ For a good sketch of the political/administrative climate in Maastricht in the period, see A. J. F. Maenen, *Petrus Regout 1801–1878. Een bijdrage tot de sociaal-economische geschiedenis van Maastricht* (Nijmegen, 1959), 81–124; cf. J. F. R. Philips, 'Een periode van sociale kentering (1880–1890)', in *Miscellanea Trajectensia. Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis van Maastricht* (Maastricht, 1962), 664.

²⁷ He was governor from 1856 to 1874; on his person and performance in office, see J. Charité (ed.), *Biografisch woordenboek van Nederland*, vol. III (The Hague, 1899), 659–61.

²⁸ Regarding this observance, see P. C. Boeren, *Heiligdomsvaart Maastricht. Schets van de geschiedenis der heiligdomsvaarten en andere jubelvaarten* (Maastricht, 1962).

Frans Rutten, the pastor and dean of St Servas's church in Maastricht, was acutely aware of the functionality and value of the traditional large-scale open-air rituals. Because this element also played an important role in the Prussian *Kulturkampf*, Rutten began to work towards heightening the public presence of the Catholic church in Limburg. This could be seen already in the grandly conceived celebrations of Pius IX's jubilee in 1869 and 1871, and Rutten's role in supporting pilgrimages to various shrines. For Pastor Rutten, moreover, the threat of a Prussian-style *Kulturkampf* in the Netherlands and the strengthening of Catholic identity and groups were reasons to resist in principle the limitations imposed by the secular authorities on the public exercise of Catholic religion. Against a background of memories of glorious medieval processions and relic displays, Rutten developed the idea of a restoration of jubilees. He wanted a public manifestation as a symbolic protest, and he wanted to revitalise and raise international awareness of the medieval Dutch shrines.²⁹

After careful planning, and under the threat of all sorts of legal consequences, Rutten held the first public jubilee celebration since the seventeenth century on 27 July 1873. The event was carefully termed a 'trial run' and was not a formal liturgical procession. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that Rutten was aiming for a confrontation, and he made it clear that the main issue was the freedom of public religious observance. A total of about 14,000 believers came together, including three bishops (of Roermond, Chersonèse and Batavia), the vicar-general of Liège and a representative of the archbishop of Cologne. Characteristic for the times was the symbolic function of neo-Gothic for the Dutch Catholic community. The neo-Gothic architects Pierre Cuypers and Johannes Kaijser, two of the foremost designers associated with the new Dutch Catholic presence in the landscape and cityscape, were also involved.

The ritual that day consisted of a translation procession with about eighty ecclesiastical dignitaries, church wardens and confraternities, in which the prelates, in ecclesiastical vestments, and accompanied by music, banners, statues of saints, torches and lanterns, transferred the relics from the church, across the central city square (the Vrijthof) to the new treasury.³⁰ Before

²⁹ Cf. the revitalisation of 'national' shrines such as Amsterdam, Dokkum and Brielle. Moreover, in Maastricht competition with the jubilee at Aachen, a celebration that also attracted many Dutch people, also played a role; see Peter Jan Margry, 'De creatie van heilige ruimten in negentiende-eeuws Nederland: het Martelveld te Brielle', in J. C. Okkema *et al.* (eds.), *Heidenen, Papen, Libertijnen en Fijnen* (Delft, 1994), 249–76.

³⁰ For a description of the procession, see *Sint Servatiusklok* of 19 and 26 July 1873; 'La solennité de la translation', *Courrier de la Meuse*, 27/28 July 1873 (no. 175); *Weekblad van het regt*, no. 3843 (1875), 2; Hutschemaekers, 'Limburgse processieperikelen', 123–5.

the event the church authorities had privately discussed the possible consequences with the police and the provincial authorities. How sensitive the situation was can be inferred from the observations of the provincial government, which took umbrage at the fact that the three invited bishops were conveyed through the city in vestments in an open carriage, in flagrant violation of the 'procession ban' forbidding members of the clergy to appear in public spaces wearing their vestments. This was even more true for the jubilee procession itself. The Public Prosecutor's Office concluded that a criminal violation had indeed been committed.

As was often the case in this period, the senior clergy were more cautious than the lower ranks. Not only Rutten's legal adviser, but his bishop Joannus Paredis had expressly counselled him not to perform any religious ritual, but at the most to hold a legitimate parade. It was, however, Rutten's intention to foreground the national, and even international resonance of the celebrations. He therefore invited ecclesiastical representatives from regions caught up in the German and Belgian culture wars, and organised a special 'Pius IX mass' that linked the whole event to the Vatican and the pope. The concluding address was delivered by the priest and later Catholic political leader, Herman Schaepman, who had recently sat in on the Vatican Council while receiving training in Rome. Schaepman told his listeners of how the Catholics were organising themselves in Germany to oppose Bismarck. He also called upon all those in attendance to pray for the beleaguered church and for 'Pius the Great'.³¹ Rutten later informed the pope by telegram of the massive response.³² The ceremonies were suffused with ultramontane sentiments; at the same time, they constituted an act of resistance against the measures of the Dutch government.

After the event Governor Van der Does informed the government in The Hague that the jubilee had incited sharp polemics and encouraged the launching of new and forbidden processions. He expected, moreover, that such 'ecclesiastical agitations' would go on for some time, because the Catholic population appeared to feel that its religious faith was at stake. The fact of the matter was that ecclesiastical developments in neighbouring Prussia had stirred up 'the sensibilities of many, very many Catholics, who otherwise would have been found to be more moderate'.³³ This, Van der Does explained, was one of the reasons why he was currently maintaining a policy of restraint rather than having the new processions broken up by

³¹ For an account of his text, 'La solennité de la translation', and 'Feestrede van Dr. Schaepman', *Weekblad De Limburger*, 2 August 1873, no. 332.

³² 'Un bel appendice à la belle fête de dimanche', *Courrier de la Meuse* 29 July 1873, no. 176.

³³ Maastricht, Limburgs Archief, provinciaal bestuur, inv. nr. 575, 31 March 1874, no. 49.

force. Because of various earlier disputes about processions in Maastricht, and the potential negative impact of the German *Kulturkampf* on Limburg society, the Public Prosecutor's Office was keen not to add fuel to the fire.³⁴ It was precisely for this reason that they had not yet proceeded with prosecutions. The former minister of justice, the Catholic attorney-general for Limburg, Martin Strens, did not even view the new processions as an infringement of the law – they were ‘mistaken, but well-intended’ – and he predicted that with a populace so strongly influenced by ultramontane sentiments, a repressive policy would only lead to major problems. He wanted to dismiss all the cases involving procession violations in order to calm Catholic feelings and avoid polarisation. He was not enthusiastic about the ‘outward display of religious ceremonies’, but took the view that even Catholic superstition might have considerable value as a civil religion that would keep the population from becoming infected with ‘the *internationale* and the *commune*’.³⁵

For Rutten all this signalled a moral victory, which strengthened him in his determination to hold a ‘real’ and much more extensive jubilee procession through the city in the following year. The project had already received the most authoritative endorsement possible, in the form of an indulgence from Pius IX to stimulate pilgrimage during the period when the relics were on display. With this, the traditional ‘kermesse des reliques’ could be revived. As a consequence, a huge procession once again moved through the city in 1874. During the double octave, moreover, pilgrims from about fifty parishes in the region converged on Maastricht in newly formed group pilgrimages.³⁶ Rutten's recidivism and the fresh provocations associated with the new jubilee made prosecution unavoidable. A controversial legal process was initiated, which led first to the conviction of Rutten, and ultimately to a judgement from the Supreme Court in 1875 that would send the procession question in a new direction.³⁷ Limburg's procession culture was drastically limited and strict rules were drawn up, similar to those in force elsewhere in the Netherlands.

One factor complicating the conflict was the politically diffuse character of the region of which Limburg was a part. The transnational Maas-Rhine region was a patchwork quilt constructed of many small former political

³⁴ The problem of processions had arisen in Maastricht previously in 1839, 1843, 1856 and 1858; see Margry, *Teedere Quaesties*, 427–8.

³⁵ The Hague, Algemeen Rijksarchief, archive of the Ministry of Justice 1813–1876, inv. nr. 4847 # 29, 6 August 1873.

³⁶ Maastricht, Limburgs Archief, episcopal archive, Roermond, inv. nr. 467, 5 May 1874; *Courrier de la Meuse* 7, 8, 9, 11, 12/13 to 26/27 July 1874.

³⁷ ‘Arrest, Hoge Raad’, of 29 October 1875, in *Weekblad van het regt*, nr. 3910, 18 November 1875, 1–3.

entities, with a historical, linguistic and socio-religious cultural landscape that transcended the nineteenth-century borders. Because national borders were less important here, processions of pilgrims frequently moved back and forth between Belgium, the German Niederrhein and Dutch Limburg; indeed they constituted one of the distinctive visual markers of the region.³⁸ For instance, the Maastricht jubilee was historically linked with those in Aachen and Kornelimünster in Germany and Tongeren in Belgium. And it was not only in the area of religion that there were mutual influences. More than elsewhere in the Netherlands, the newspapers were oriented to the international region. They constantly reported on developments elsewhere in the border regions, and on the possible effects these might have in their own province. The ban on processions by the Liberal burgomaster in neighbouring Liège, after a confrontation with truncheons, made an impression throughout the area. When a group of liberals in Brussels brought a procession to a halt in 1875 and held several parodies of processions, the Catholics assumed the existence of a liberal conspiracy. The Limburg newspapers suggested that the German ambassador to Brussels, bowing to the wishes of Belgian and Prussian liberals, had received instructions to request the Belgian government to forbid processions entirely.³⁹ This led to increased fears that further limitations on the rights of Catholics in Limburg would be forthcoming. The Prussians, for their part, let the Dutch know that henceforth no Dutch pilgrim groups or processions would be permitted entry, and the processional pilgrimages from Overijssel in the direction of Vreden and Stadtlohn in Germany, were kept under surveillance. These pilgrimages had generally only formed up as a procession once they had crossed the border with Prussia, but the Dutch government feared that the ritual would henceforth take place on the Dutch side of the border.

Although Governor Van der Does was fearful of escalation and problems with Prussia, he downplayed the affair to himself and others. In his briefings with the minister of home affairs he continued to emphasise that no *serious* breaches of the peace or disruptions of public order had yet taken place. By comparison with Prussia, indeed, the situation was still relatively

³⁸ Heinz L. Cox, 'Die Auswirkungen der deutsch-niederländischen Staatsgrenze von 1815 auf die volkstümliche Heiligenverehrung im Rhein-Maasgebiet; Ein Beitrag zur kulturräumlichen Stellung des Rhein-Maas-Gebietes', *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* 28 (1983), 111–31; Matthias Zender, *Räume und Schichten mittelalterlicher Heiligenverehrung in ihrer Bedeutung für die Volkskunde. Die Heiligen des mittleren Maaslandes und der Rheinlande in Kultgeschichte und Kultverbreitung* (Düsseldorf, 1959). In 1879 at least twenty-two Catholic congregations from the diocese of Roermond travelled to Kevelaer in procession. Eleonore Föhles, *Kulturkampf und katholisches Milieu 1866–1890 in den niederrheinischen Kreisen Kempen und Geldern und der Stadt Viersen* (Geldern, 1995), 221–33, unfortunately gives no information about pilgrimages going to the Netherlands.

³⁹ For all this, see 'België', *Maas- en Roerbode*, 29 May 1875, no. 22.

calm, although there was undeniably friction and a sense of mutual threat between Catholics and liberals. It was noted that the personal celebration of confirmation by Bishop Paredis of Roermond in parishes along the Dutch border had enticed thousands of Germans to cross over. However, aside from the procession question, the problem that appeared most frequently in provincial reports to the government in The Hague was the settlement in Limburg of German monks and nuns, especially after 1875. Limburg seems to have been a particularly attractive refuge for those who had fallen foul of the German May Laws.⁴⁰ In the year 1875 alone, 167 female and 307 male religious (of whom 244 were Jesuits) settled in the province. As far as can be determined, a total of about 1,300 religious settled in the Netherlands during the *Kulturkampf*, almost all of them regulars belonging to some twenty-five different congregations.⁴¹

Furthermore, the relatively large number of Jesuits among the immigrants contributed to the diffusion of wild myths about this order.⁴² Media representation of the procession question and other religious issues came to be dominated by caricatures of Jesuits. The 'cloister question', which was playing itself out in the Netherlands at this time, was likewise linked with the Jesuit 'black international'. In 1848, the law of 1814 forbidding the establishment of new monasteries as existing ones closed was repealed, with the result that monastic establishments proliferated, from 200 in 1861 to over 500 in 1888. This institutional growth was a thorn in the side for Protestants, especially because the construction of the new buildings threatened to disrupt the hitherto Protestant character of the landscape. In fact, it was above all in the sphere of architecture and the visual arts that a distinctively Catholic visual vocabulary emerged. An implicitly antagonistic morphology was developed, in the form of the widely used neo-Gothic architectural style. The neo-Gothic style had not, in fact, traditionally been associated in the Netherlands with Catholic confessionality; it was seen rather as a neutral idiom, suitable for public buildings, including Protestant churches and even the palace of King Willem II. By the end of the 1850s, however,

⁴⁰ Föhles, *Kulturkampf und katholisches Milieu*, pp. 50 and 255.

⁴¹ Limburgs Archief, provinciaal bestuur, inv. nr. 575, report on 1875, 27 March 1876, no. 80; De Coninck, 'Een les uit Pruisen', 296–301; Ubachs, *Handboek voor de geschiedenis van Limburg*, 401; Ubachs maintains that the number for Limburg was 650 at most. For the regional significance of all this, see Herbert Lepper, 'Der 'Kulturkampf' im Rheinland und seine Auswirkungen auf Belgien und auf die Niederlande – Eine Skizze', in Detlev Arens (ed.), *Rhein-Maas-Kulturreaum in Europa* (Keulen, 1991), 82–3.

⁴² Cubitt, *The Jesuit Myth*; for such myths in the Netherlands in 1844/5 and 1853, see J. A. Bornewasser, 'Mythical Aspects of Dutch Anti-Catholicism in the Nineteenth Century', in J. S. Bromley and E. H. Kossmann (eds.), *Britain and the Netherlands, Some Political Mythologies* (The Hague, 1975), 184–206.

a Catholic variant of the neo-Gothic style had emerged, which embodied claims for the history and truth of Catholic doctrines. The style was increasingly claimed or appropriated by Catholics, and acquired thereby a distinctively Catholic flavour. It was increasingly seen as a public assertion of Catholic doctrinal truth; the Gothic style was 'proof of the antiquity and immortality of faith', as the Dutch bishop, Gerardus Wilmer, formulated it.⁴³

The architectural design competition for the new national museum of the arts – the Rijksmuseum – at the end of the culture wars is an excellent case in point. The winning design was that of the Catholic Limburg architect, Pierre Cuypers. Critics disparaged the plan, claiming that it was more suitable for a cathedral, a monastery or an episcopal palace. The appropriation of the neo-Gothic architectural style by the Catholics in a sense marks a culture war that the Catholics actually won. On the occasion of the opening of the museum in 1885 a liberal magazine published a critical cartoon depicting it as a religious building, surrounded by processions and priests.⁴⁴

As well as architecture, printed and visual materials also became strategic propaganda instruments. The Catholic visual repertoire inspired by Rome and its iconographic elaboration in the Netherlands in these years bore witness to the rapid growth of ultramontane Catholicism; symbols of the pope (the triple crown and keys of St Peter) and the Vatican (St Peter's Church and Square) were enormously popular; indeed they became a kind of independent paradigm of the church itself.

The German *Kulturkampf* provided the immediate stimulus for a more robust legislative resolution of the Dutch procession question. The parliamentary questions occasioned by Rutten's second jubilee procession in 1874 did not set off any political fireworks at the time.⁴⁵ The Conservative minister of justice, Constant van Lynden van Sandenburg, a Reformed church member who had been included in Prime Minister Theodorus Heemskerk's second cabinet (1874–7) shortly before, simply referred the parliament to the 1853 law and the judges who had used it since then to rule on the legality of processions. Nevertheless, in the face of international developments and

⁴³ J. van Laarhoven (ed.), 'Naar Gotieken kunstzin'. *Kerkelijke kunst en cultuur in Noord-Brabant in de negentiende eeuw* ('s-Hertogenbosch, 1979), 33–4.

⁴⁴ Margry, *Teedere Quaesties*, 152–4; Nop Maas, *De literaire wereld van Carel Vosmaer. Een documentaire* (The Hague, 1979), 86–9.

⁴⁵ *Handelingen van de Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal* 1874–1875, Bijlagen A, no. 117, 20 and no. 129, 15. De Coninck, 'Een les uit Pruisen', 232–45.

the activism of Catholic laypeople and clergy, the Protestant and Conservative/Liberal majority in the Lower House became increasingly determined to take a stand against the further proliferation of processions, with their associated incidents of conflict and unrest.

The threat of escalation was great, because, as Limburg's Bishop Paredis acknowledged, priests were taking an increasingly critical attitude toward the civil government, influenced as it was by the *Kulturkampf*, and were no longer willing to follow the cautious course charted by the bishop.⁴⁶ If the Maastricht jubilee procession was still controlled and planned from above, the incidents surrounding other processions generally arose spontaneously, at the initiative of local pastors or procession or confraternity officials. Furthermore, because politicians and the judiciary were not yet clear about precisely what was forbidden, in practice all processions – and particularly new initiatives – were routinely escorted and monitored by police and judicial officials. Around the middle of the 1870s there were thus a number of incidents involving arrests and even the occasional physical confrontation.⁴⁷ On the other hand, adjoining Rhineland-Westphalia, with eleven violent confrontations between Catholics and the authorities, was considerably more discordant.⁴⁸ The harder attitude of the Prussian authorities had the effect that the leaders of processions and pilgrimages, more or less following the footsteps of the Prussian religious, sought refuge on Dutch soil. This new cross-border effect finally tipped the scales toward a harder policy on the part of Dutch politicians and the government.⁴⁹

On the orders of Justice Minister Van Lynden, the public prosecutor in Maastricht, A. B. M. Hanlo, secretly circularised the assistant prosecutors in Limburg at the beginning of the procession season in 1877, instructing them to take action against all new procession initiatives. Alluding to the formation of Kappeyne's left-Liberal cabinet shortly thereafter, the regional Catholic newspapers now spoke of a 'Liberal government in Limburg', and predicted a campaign against processions and pilgrimages.⁵⁰ In the first half of 1878 alone, indictments were issued against fifteen processions. If these involved foreign processions, they were in each case stopped with the

⁴⁶ J. M. Gijsen, *Joannes Augustinus Paredis (1795–1886) bisschop van Roermond en het Limburg van zijn tijd* (Assen, 1968), 337–8.

⁴⁷ For an overview, see Hutschemaekers, 'Limburgse processieperikelen', passim.

⁴⁸ Sperber, *Popular Catholicism*, 229–33; Föhles, *Kulturkampf und katholisches Milieu*, 235–7.

⁴⁹ As in 1855–6, so in 1875–8, during the 'caccia alle processioni', the Vatican was kept informed of the events through its internuncio G. Capri. Active intervention was hardly possible in this situation. See J. P. de Valk, *Romeinse bescheiden . . . 1832–1914* (The Hague, 1996), I, nos. 3503, 3539, 3606, 3638, 3709 and 3730.

⁵⁰ *Maas- en Roerbode*, 28 September 1878, no. 39.

help of the police. It was intended that this should send a clear signal to foreigners that the Netherlands too had reached the bounds of its tolerance. But the Prussian Catholics were not to be frightened off, as was shown by a procession of some 300 people that made its way from Kempen into the Netherlands on 24 August 1878. They wanted to make use of what they considered their right to process to the Marian shrine at Roermond praying and singing. They did not see this as merely a liturgical ritual, but also as a political and strategic action to denounce the new 'Dutch *Kulturkampf*'. These pressures in the border areas forced the government to take a stand. The consequence was the clash in Roermond with which this chapter opened. When a processional pilgrimage from the Prussian town of Haaren was violently dispersed on Sunday, 15 September 1878, the situation changed instantly. Almost all the parties involved felt that this confrontation between the Dutch authorities and the pilgrims marked a low point in the procession conflict, and almost everyone was of the opinion that things could not be allowed to go on like this. Politicians in The Hague concluded that the police and the judiciary had gone too far, and Catholic Limburg was reinforced in its belief that a liberal conspiracy was afoot. And yet, in a sense, it was precisely this hard line which finally brought peace to the situation. The question was formally settled in 1879 with two judgements from the Supreme Court concerning the sentences of two Limburg clergymen. Pastor Rutten and his Limburg colleagues held their peace and for several decades the defeated residents of Haaren and other Prussian communities no longer dared to mount collective pilgrimages to the Netherlands.⁵¹ The years 1878–9 were thus a turning-point. Peace returned to the procession question.

CONCLUSIONS: THE IMPACT OF THE CULTURE WARS

In the 1870s the procession question was primarily a regional affair. The exceptional position of Catholic Limburg as the last province to be integrated into the kingdom ensured that there would be firm support for processions there. Limburg's ecclesiastical and social elite wanted to protect regional culture, and this objective was broadly supported by the populace. As a rule, the new processions were not initiatives of the lower classes. The example of the dean of the province's most famous church, St Servas in Maastricht, set the tone. Ultramontane newspapers supported the initiatives; at the same time they supported and endorsed local understandings of

⁵¹ Schmitz, 'Deutsche Wallfahrten naar Roermond', 104.

the meaning and importance of religious traditions and rituals. The landed nobility of Limburg played its own peculiar role in all this. After 1872, they offered their country houses as premises for new monastic communities, encouraged priests in organising processions, and committed themselves to paying any legal costs that were incurred as a result.⁵² The proximity of Germany was also significant. Many of the religious who had fled during the German *Kulturkampf* did not return to their homeland after its end in 1887, but quickly integrated into their new surroundings, thereby increasing the influence of German Catholicism on the Dutch church. Separate Dutch provinces of German congregations were established. Apart from this, the influence of the German *Kulturkampf* was primarily indirect; polemical representations and a mutual sense of threat were reinforced in the Netherlands by the conflict across the border, and militants on both sides felt their views were being vindicated. For the most part, however, Dutch Liberals thought Bismarck's politics to be counter-productive. The vast majority rejected direct repression and remained true to the Dutch tradition of repressive tolerance.⁵³

There was also a large Catholic majority in North Brabant, and now and then the procession question flared up there, albeit less than in Limburg; elsewhere in the country low levels of support meant that only minor incidents occurred. There were few organisational links between the local initiators in the various parishes. At the most, there was a collective play on public sentiments through media and parochial channels. The processional question was chiefly a local matter. Local clergy and Catholic leaders often took the initiative. Bishops and vicars, on the one hand, preferred if possible to avoid provoking the authorities and the national Protestant majority, and they were in any case unenthusiastic about spontaneous initiatives on the part of churchgoing laypeople. In the nineteenth-century Netherlands, as in many other countries, a process of national integration was taking place, the consequence of better communications and more effective government, among other factors.⁵⁴ Exceptions such as that of Limburg, which previously could be tolerated, became increasingly difficult to maintain in the more centralised nation of the late nineteenth century. This was

⁵² Houses in Exaten, Baexem, Swalmen, Bleijenbeek near Bergen, Wijnandsrade and Vaals, see Limburgs Archief, provinciaal bestuur, inv. 575, report on 1872, 31 maart 1873, no. 49; further also Lepper, 'Der 'Kulturkampf'', 79–81; Margry, *Tedere Quaesties*, 327–8.

⁵³ De Coninck, 'Een les uit Pruisen', 161, 300–1 and 311–19.

⁵⁴ For the Netherlands, H. Knippenberg and B. de Pater, *De eenwording van Nederland. Schaalvergroting en integratie sinds 1800* (Nijmegen, 1988), which is inspired by Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen. The Modernization of Rural France, 1870–1914* (Stanford, 1976).

certainly one aspect of the consternation generated by the Limburg procession question. The ecclesiastical authorities, for their part, were also at work on organisation and integration at the national level. The Catholic church was undergoing a process that paralleled that of the nation-states,⁵⁵ and certainly in the Netherlands, where an episcopal hierarchy had only existed since 1853, the ecclesiastical authorities looked with suspicion upon local initiatives. This is why stronger government regulation initially met with little resistance from the ecclesiastical authorities, and why they were willing to cooperate in a compromise that did not leave religion in public spaces entirely free, but left their own authority intact.

Consistent with the liberal and Protestant domination of public life, liberal forces at the national level had generally taken the initiative, spurred on by traditional Protestant distaste for any public manifestation of the Catholic religion. At first sight, the outcome of the conflict seems to have been an unambiguous defeat for the Catholics. They now began to hold their processions in specially constructed procession parks, screened off from public thoroughfares, or circumvented the ban on processions through what were termed 'silent processions', such as that in Amsterdam, in which Catholics passed through the city without loud prayers, Catholic vestments or other Catholic symbols.⁵⁶ The question also lost part of its urgency through the expansion of the railways and tram lines, which afforded alternatives to the journey on foot to pilgrimage sites – this too accelerated the disappearance of collective pilgrimages from public space. Finally, the outcome of the conflict surrounding processions created a clarity that resulted in restored peace. People on both sides accepted the new situation, and the provocations ceased.

The Catholics actually had much to gain from this outcome. In some European countries, the culture wars may have reinforced processes of secularisation, resulting in a decline in the influence of church-related parties. That was certainly not the case in the Netherlands. When, beginning in the 1870s, new groups began to enter the public domain that had been redefined by the Liberals in 1848, it appeared at first to be a general free-for-all for the domination of public life: Protestants against Catholics, Liberals against orthodox Protestants and Catholics, and all groups against the Socialists. The

⁵⁵ Peter Raedts, 'Tussen Rome en Den Haag: de integratie van de Nederlandse katholieken in kerk en staat' in Te Velde and Verhage (eds.), *De eenheid en de delen*, 29–44.

⁵⁶ Cf. Peter Raedts, 'Le saint sacrement du miracle d'Amsterdam: lieu de mémoire de l'identité catholique', in Pim den Boer and Willem Frijhoff (eds.), *Lieux de mémoire et identités nationales* (Amsterdam, 1993), 237–51.

culmination of the procession question in the 1870s must be seen against this background: this was a struggle for public space, literally a struggle for the streets. However, no one group achieved domination; instead there emerged what were elsewhere called *Lager* (political camps) or *milieu* parties, termed *zuilen* (pillars) in Dutch – socio-moral communities within which not only the ecclesiastical, but also the whole social and cultural life of those involved took place. In addition to the orthodox Protestant pillar, there arose a Catholic and thereafter a Social Democratic pillar, while the Liberals were more or less forced into the position of a neutral island. The different moral communities later came to tolerate one another, although great contrasts remained. The Netherlands became a country of minorities, none of which was in a position to dominate national politics alone, without support from other minorities. Thus, the Catholics needed allies. In 1872 they were still fighting with the orthodox Protestants; in the 1870s the procession question came to a head. But 1888 saw the formation of the first combined government of Catholics and orthodox Protestants. The two groups had a common interest in protecting their own confessional worlds against the influence of a neutral state. Of the two questions which dominated the Dutch culture wars between 1870 and 1890, namely schools and processions, it would appear that the mass of Catholic churchgoers attached more importance to the latter – it was, after all, a question of the practice and public manifestation of their faith – whereas the Catholic elite saw the former at the chief concern. The procession question was the *quid pro quo* that made success in the school question possible. In 1889, a school law was adopted which accommodated the wishes of the confessional parties; it was followed by a constitutional amendment in 1917 that finally settled the issue.

A highly emotional conflict between Catholics and Protestants over processions did not serve this common interest. Cooperation with the traditionally strongly anti-papist orthodox Protestants made it possible for the Catholics to strengthen their position both in national politics and in social and cultural life. Thus, it could be said that defeat in the procession question yielded indirect gains. After the first Catholic–orthodox Protestant cabinet there was an era of alternating Liberal and confessional governments, but from 1918 onwards Catholics participated in all coalition governments; for a long period, indeed, there were only confessional cabinets. The dominant position of the confessional parties in Dutch politics has only recently disappeared: until 1994 their involvement was a central and abiding feature of political life. This share in political power was acquired, as we have seen, at a price. Ecclesiastical processions and public

religious rituals continued to be forbidden. In any case, the urgency of the issue ultimately waned. After the Second Vatican Council (1963–5) Dutch Catholics turned away from the procession, whose rituals were now seen as old-fashioned, and Protestants, on the other hand, ceased to find public processions threatening. In this sense, the procession question solved itself, and in 1983 the procession ban too finally disappeared from the Dutch constitution.

Nonconformity, clericalism and 'Englishness': the United Kingdom

J. P. Parry

This chapter focuses on the conflict about the attitude that the British state should take to religious education and to church establishments, particularly between 1870 and 1874 – the point in the nineteenth century at which both debates became most contentious. In 1872 a large conference of Protestant nonconformists at Manchester declared in favour of the principle of restricting the educational syllabus in state-funded schools to secular subjects. Between 1871 and 1873 the campaign by the Liberation Society for the disestablishment of the church of England reached a new intensity and prompted the only significant motions for English disestablishment ever discussed in the House of Commons. This movement has sometimes been called the 'nonconformist revolt'. According to this view, it was a revolt by nonconformists – who were overwhelmingly Liberal Party supporters – against the Liberal government of the day, for betraying their principles.¹ But though there is some truth in this view, this chapter argues that it is more helpful to see it in a number of other lights. It was, firstly, an attack on local clerical influence: nonconformists had an innate suspicion of the Anglican priesthood's ambitions to sway the individual religious conscience. Secondly, this led nonconformists to mobilise against the political consequences of that clerical influence, and so their campaign became a political one, part of a partisan Liberal struggle against the Conservative Party. Thirdly, it was a response to a powerful Catholic challenge – a response that was vehement but self-consciously patriotic and constitutional. That

¹ There has been a long-standing view that nonconformist dissatisfaction with the government was one of the main causes of the Liberal election defeat of 1874: see, e.g., J. P. Rossi, 'The Transformation of the British Liberal Party: A Study of the Tactics of the Liberal Opposition, 1874–1880', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 68/8 (1978), 11–12, and A. D. Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England: Church, Chapel and Social Change, 1740–1914* (London, 1976), 195. D. A. Hamer gave the 'revolt' a lot of attention, even though he recognised that it was waning by 1873–4: *The Politics of Electoral Pressure: A Study in the History of Victorian Reform Agitations* (Hassocks, 1977), 122–38. I argued that it had little electoral significance in J. P. Parry, *Democracy and Religion: Gladstone and the Liberal Party, 1867–1875* (Cambridge, 1986), 396–9.

Catholic challenge appeared to arise at three levels: the local (especially in Lancashire), the Irish and the continental. This chapter examines both the nonconformist agitation and the Anglican reaction to it. That reaction, though by no means exclusively confined to Conservative Anglicans, was exploited by the Conservative Party. Like the nonconformist agitation, it was at one level a political movement but at another a claim to represent the true spirit of Protestantism and English nationhood.

In other words, the disputes of 1870–4 between nonconformists and Anglicans operated at various levels. The party-political angle cannot be ignored, not least because it helps to explain the virulence of the local clashes. But the disputes are also relevant to a book on ‘culture wars’, for two reasons. Firstly, the clash can itself be seen as a secular–clerical conflict, in a literal sense. Most Anglicans believed that among the most important symbols of the United Kingdom’s Protestantism were its church establishments, Episcopalian in England and Wales and Presbyterian in Scotland. Until it was disestablished in 1869, many even defended the Episcopalian established church in Ireland. When leading evangelical nonconformists called for ‘religious equality’ in the early 1870s, they rejected not just all establishments but also the state provision or subsidy of religious teaching in schools – a policy that became known as educational secularism. Their opponents gleefully accused them of allying with free-thinkers and republican or socialist working-men – in other words, with the movements identified with the secular idea on the continent.² However, nonconformists denied that they were secularists except in the most superficial of senses, arguing that the withdrawal of the state from the religious sphere would invigorate Protestant activity throughout Britain. The Birmingham Congregationalist preacher R. W. Dale, probably the single most influential figure in their campaigns of the early 1870s, declared in a lecture in November 1871 that ‘we are political nonconformists not because we wish to make the political life of England less religious, but because we wish to make it more religious’.³ They sought to make England more genuinely Protestant. Both nonconformists and their Anglican opponents were claiming to represent the dominant Protestantism of English culture at a time when the declaration of papal infallibility at the Vatican Council in 1870 had given the Catholic church a particularly high profile on the continent and in Ireland. The continental and Irish context profoundly affected British politics in the early 1870s. In that sense, both nonconformists and Anglicans were

² E.g. *Spectator*, 6 July 1872, 842.

³ R. W. Dale, *The Politics of Nonconformity: A Lecture* (Manchester, 1871), 32.

engaged in a 'culture war' of a sort against an 'un-English' Catholicism – while at the same time trying not to alienate too many Catholics politically.

In order to explain the reasons for the religious tensions of the 1870s, the chapter is divided into four sections. The first sets the scene by considering the effects of the Irish problem on British Liberal politics in the years leading up to 1870. The second charts the course of nonconformist dissatisfaction with the 1870 Education Act, focusing on the local struggles against its 'Clause 25'. The third demonstrates how the Irish and continental situation led the nonconformists to broaden that campaign into an advocacy of 'secularism'. The fourth shows how this in turn stimulated a major reaction by Anglicans in defence of what they claimed were traditional English political and religious values.

Irish Catholicism was a particular concern for the Liberal Party. It had begun as a party of 'outsiders' and had always relied on the support of both British nonconformists and Irish Catholics. For this and other reasons, the Irish Catholic church was a major force in politics by the mid-nineteenth century, which governments could not ignore. This section looks at some of the strategies used to conciliate it, and shows particularly that the Irish problem played a large part in pushing radical nonconformists towards their policy of 'religious equality', in an attempt to combine justice to Ireland with the kindling of Protestant vigour.

Catholic emancipation in 1829 had quickly led to the emergence of a numerous Irish Catholic parliamentary grouping which usually provided Liberal governments with support and sometimes held the balance of power in parliament. This naturally encouraged those governments to pursue constitutional and religious reform in Ireland, which in any case was congenial to many Liberal policy-makers. Conservative governments were also interested in conciliating Irish Catholics, with a view to preventing political tension and securing order. Both parties recognised the importance of the Catholic clergy in underpinning the rule of law and the acceptance of the Union. Both were also willing to attempt informal understandings with the pope in the hope that Vatican influence would check Irish priestly disloyalty.⁴

In other words, governments in varying degrees implicitly and informally accepted the dominant standing of the Irish Catholic church, and were reluctant to pick quarrels with it. The Liberal Party emerged in the

⁴ See Donal Kerr, *Peel, Priests and Politics: Sir Robert Peel's Administration and the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, 1841–1846* (Oxford, 1982), and Donal Kerr, *A Nation of Beggars?: Priests, People, and Politics in Famine Ireland, 1846–1852* (Oxford, 1994).

1830s as a body committed to listen to the grievances of Irish Catholics as well as of British nonconformists. In the next twenty years its constitutional and institutional reforms enhanced Catholic representation in parliament, local government, the administration, the police and the magistracy. And it recognised Catholics' complaints about the dominance of the established church of Ireland, which they saw as the symbol and basis of the 'Protestant ascendancy'. In 1834–5 Liberals caused a constitutional crisis by their commitment (never realised, owing to its unpopularity in Britain) to appropriate the surplus revenues of the church of Ireland for national purposes. Moreover, in 1831 the government had established a 'national' system of elementary education in Ireland, in which secular subjects and an anthology of biblical extracts would be taught to children of all sects, while more doctrinal religious instruction had to be provided voluntarily by the denominations. This was much resented by the church of Ireland and in practice allowed the Catholics to dominate education in most parts of the country.

However it would be misleading to see the Irish policy of the 1830s and 1840s as simplistically pro-Catholic. If it had a dominant tendency, it was towards the ideal of some leading Whig/Liberals (principally Lord John Russell) for 'concurrent endowment' by the state of all Irish religions. The theory was that concurrent endowment would encourage the civilising social and educational activities of all denominations, enhance the status, social independence and loyalty of the Catholic clergy, demonstrate the state's commitment to religion and to tolerance, and solve the Catholic political grievance without removing the Episcopalian church establishment. The principle of concurrent endowment was embodied in a small way in the government grant to the Catholic training college at Maynooth, which Peel increased and made permanent in 1845, with Whig support but in the teeth of intense British Protestant opposition. It was being practised in English educational policy: Russell's government made Catholic schools, as well as Protestant ones, eligible for Privy Council grants in 1847. Most contentiously, Russell wanted to offer the Irish Catholic priests some endowment, in the shape of a plot of land each, a scheme which he sought to introduce in 1847–8. But this was a step too far, being unacceptable to British Protestant MPs, already incensed by Maynooth, and to the majority of the Catholic hierarchy in Ireland, growing in political confidence and increasingly suspicious of the whole concurrent endowment strategy. The result was a bitter tussle on the abstract issue of 'Who governs Ireland?' In 1850, Paul Cullen, made archbishop of Armagh in 1849 after thirty years' residence at Rome, persuaded most Catholic bishops to declare against the

new mixed university colleges, the Queen's Colleges, rightly seeing them as an attempt by the British government to emancipate the middle-class Catholic laity from clerical influence. The growing power of the bishops, and their apparent leaning to Rome, incensed Russell and contributed to the gross error of his Durham letter of 1850 and Ecclesiastical Titles Act of 1851, in which he condemned the hierarchy's attempt to put itself above the rule of state law, a cardinal sin to the Whig mind. The issue was purely abstract and would make no difference to the real status of the bishops; but abstractions and symbols mattered enormously to both Russell and the Irish. Russell's policy ruined his reputation as a friend to Ireland, created a great popular reaction there against the Whigs, led to the emergence of a short-lived party of independent Irish MPs at the election of 1852, with priestly support, and marked the virtual death-knell of the concurrent endowment strategy.⁵

At the same time, the events of 1845–51 strengthened the opposition of British nonconformists to concurrent endowment. It was in the 1840s that the advanced nonconformists worked out a coherent policy of 'religious equality' – disestablishment and disendowment of state churches and a rejection of all payments by tax- and rate-payers to the state for religious purposes. This culminated in the establishment, in 1853, of the Liberation Society – the Society for the Liberation of Religion from State Patronage and Control.⁶ The first and crucial step in this process was their opposition to the Conservative government's Factory Bill of 1843 which gave Anglican clergymen a privileged position in the factory schooling system that the bill planned. But what caused the logic of 'religious equality' to become so widely accepted by nonconformists over the next few years was the need to grapple with the successive stages of the Catholic problem: the Maynooth debates, the Privy Council grants to Catholic schools, and the disputes over endowment and education in Ireland. And it was no coincidence that at the same time unprecedented publicity was being given both to the growing influence of the high church Oxford Movement in the church of England and to the obstacles to continental constitutionalism posed by the power and illiberalism of the Catholic church before and after the 1848 revolutions. Central to nonconformity was its protest against the claims of Anglican and Catholic priests to influence the lay conscience and to

⁵ See Kerr, *A nation of beggars?*; J. H. Whyte, *The Independent Irish Party, 1850–9* (London, 1958); J. P. Parry, 'Lord John Russell and the Irish Catholics, 1829–52', *Journal of Liberal Democrat History*, 33 (winter 2001–2), 9–12.

⁶ Formerly the Anti-State Church Association (1844). For the development of the doctrine of 'religious equality', see T. Larsen, *Friends of Religious Equality: Nonconformist Politics in Mid-Victorian England* (Woodbridge, 1999).

bend it for religious or political ends. Priests interfered with man's duty to enter into a full and free relationship with God and to obey divine laws. State encouragement of priesthood obstructed the duty of the evangelical Protestant to create the foundation of a free community by bringing the minds of men into conformity with God. By standing up to 'royal and ecclesiastical imperiousness' and saying 'This conscience is not for you', nonconformists had kept alive the spirit of 'civil and religious freedom' in England which Toryism would have killed long ago.⁷

They were thus 'English of the English'.⁸ Nonconformist commitment to religious equality was an intensely patriotic movement. In the 1860s and 1870s nonconformists pointed to the increasing interest in the 'free church in a free state' formula on the continent as evidence that their principles were gaining ground. But they saw themselves – and their Anglo-Saxon brethren in the United States – as the pace-setters, most definitely not as followers of continental fashions.⁹ Indeed they associated European regimes with the hated 'concurrent endowment'. But England, too, was deviating from its proper function by endowing priesthood. Establishment created social exclusiveness and sectarianism, imperilling national unity. This 'weakened the authority of law and dimmed the splendour of government' – alarming at a time of rising infidelity and democracy in Europe.¹⁰ Many priests in country parishes lapsed into apathy and formalism without congregations having the power to correct their behaviour. In the olden days, priests had used their privileged position to preach ungodly doctrine; now the more serious danger was that, in order to maintain their state endowments, contending sects within the established church were making compacts to fudge doctrinal issues, thus allowing individual ministers to preach contradictory messages. For all these reasons, establishments, rather than keeping the nation faithful to the gospel of Christ, prevented it from becoming a great community conscientiously searching for religious truth. The church of England, despite its name, interfered with England's providential mission; it was the nonconformists who formed 'the true National Churches of England'.¹¹

To nonconformists, a properly 'English' policy necessarily implied freedom for other religions, however autocratic they were. Indeed nonconformist hostility to concurrent endowment paved the way to a reworking

⁷ Edward Miall at Manchester, in *Nonconformist*, 15 January 1873, 59; Henry Vincent at Manchester, in *Report of the General Conference of Nonconformists, Held in Manchester, January 23, 24, and 25, 1872* (Manchester, 1872), 203–5.

⁸ Dr Kennedy, chairman of the Congregational Union, at its Nottingham meeting: *Nonconformist*, 16 October 1872, 1055.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 4 May 1871, 414; 23 October 1872, 1069.

¹⁰ R. W. Dale at Wolverhampton: *ibid.*, 15 March 1871, 247.

¹¹ A. M. Fairbairn, 'Independency and the State', *British Quarterly Review* 73 (April 1881), 461.

of the old, tentative alliance with Irish Catholics. Irish Fenian outrages, including on the British mainland at Manchester in 1867, made Irish grievances difficult to ignore, at just the time when the Liberal Party was seeking a direction in a post-Palmerstonian, post-reform world. In December 1864 Irish laymen and priests had founded the National Association to press for consideration of three issues, including the disestablishment and disendowment of the church of Ireland. The Liberation Society had taken up the cause of Irish disestablishment in 1853 and Edward Miall, their parliamentary spokesman, had moved for it in 1856; O'Neill Daunt, one of the National Association leaders, began corresponding with the secretary of the Liberation Society, Carvell Williams, in the same year.¹² In the mid-1860s, both bodies agitated for it; the old Whig cry of 'Justice to Ireland' was revived on this new footing. The eagerness and earnestness with which the new Liberal leader Gladstone took up the issue, pronounced decisively against concurrent endowment and then executed a workable disestablishment scheme in 1869, won him the unparalleled admiration and enthusiasm of nonconformist activists.¹³ In the process, and significantly, he terminated the Maynooth grant. It appeared to nonconformists as if a workable and uplifting policy had finally been found for the defence of the right religious values. In the aftermath of establishing a more representative electoral system in 1867, Britain had embarked on the road of dismantling her support for establishments and priesthoods of all persuasions, and the Catholics had seen the justice of that approach as an imperial policy. As a Manchester journalist later remarked, to the ardent nonconformist in 1871 England appeared to be reaching perfection: 'the times were a paradise of the Dissenting middle classes'.¹⁴

This review of Anglo-Irish Liberal politics allows us to see not only why nonconformist hopes for the establishment of a new political and religious order were so high in 1869–71, but also why the crisis that emerged almost immediately after the disestablishment of the church of Ireland was so profound. Nonconformists saw disestablishment as a precursor to 'religious equality' throughout the United Kingdom. Most Tory Anglicans, and British and Irish Catholics, were wedded to denominational education as a guarantee of religion and order in an era of unsettling change in Britain and abroad. Liberal Anglicans, while willing to update their historic sympathy for Irish constitutional grievances so far as to abandon concurrent

¹² E. R. Norman, *The Catholic Church and Ireland in the Age of Rebellion, 1859–1873* (London, 1965); P. M. H. Bell, *Disestablishment in Ireland and Wales* (Farnborough, 1969).

¹³ *Nonconformist*, 25 January 1871, 73.

¹⁴ Haslam Mills, quoted in Clyde Binfield, *So Down to Prayers: Studies in English Nonconformity, 1780–1920* (London, 1977), 106.

endowment in Ireland (with great reluctance, in some cases), remained of the view that the support of church establishment and undenominational mixed education was the best defence of Protestant religion in Britain. In such circumstances, it was decidedly unfortunate for Gladstone's government that it introduced the most far-reaching Education Act in English history in the same year as western Europe became riven by major war and the pope lost his temporal power but declared his infallibility.

The 1870 Elementary Education Act required the establishment of a school board, in England and Wales, wherever the existing schools set up by voluntary educational agencies did not provide enough accommodation for the school population, or where rate-payers demanded one. The board was charged with meeting that deficiency by building and maintaining new schools out of the rates. These schools were to provide an efficient education in secular subjects; they need not offer religious instruction, but if they did then 'no catechism or formulary distinctive of any particular denomination' was to be taught. In a country as noted for its cheeseparing rate-payers as for its established church, it would have been inconceivable to decline to maintain existing schools as well. The Act continued and indeed increased their grant support as long as they accepted a timetable conscience clause (placing religious instruction at the beginning and end of the school day so that dissenting children could escape it). But their grants were still to be provided by the Privy Council system rather than through the local rates. Three-quarters of these schools were run by the church of England. Catholics and Wesleyans also maintained substantial numbers of schools, as did the British and Foreign Schools Society (BFSS), historically patronised by Whigs and moderate nonconformists and providing undenominational religious teaching. Since the 1840s, the main evangelical nonconformist sects had refused to accept Privy Council grants and had run their own schools, at great cost to themselves but without spreading their system very far. Unable either to compete with the steady increase in the Privy Council grant between 1850 and 1870, or to make many inroads into school non-attendance, leading nonconformists finally announced in 1867 their recognition that this 'voluntaryist' strategy had failed and that some sort of national system was necessary.¹⁵

The 1870 Act is now generally regarded as a judicious but major step towards a national system of elementary education. Perceptive commentators at the time saw that that would be its long-term effect – that ultimately

¹⁵ The most important declaration was that by Edward Baines: see *ibid.*, 87–90.

the board schools, supported by the rates, would be better funded and more popular than the voluntary denominational schools, and that the bulk of the latter would eventually either transfer into, or in other ways cooperate with, the state system. This, however, was not the perspective of the nonconformists who agitated against the Act. They saw it as a measure to set up a 'new Establishment' and a 'new church rate', a great boon to priesthood and sectarianism, a betrayal of their Protestant vision for England, and an untenable basis on which to build an 'imperial', that is an Irish, policy. It was all the more unacceptable for being passed by a Liberal government dependent on, and ultimately accountable to, the votes of nonconformists.

The 1870 Act was undoubtedly favourable to denominational schools in a number of ways. Educational agencies had a 'year of grace' (in fact five months) in which to make plans to fill up the educational deficiency themselves. They could apply for government building grants which would pay half the cost of new schools; over 3,000 grants were submitted.¹⁶ School boards were elected on the cumulative vote, a system which deliberately favoured religious minorities. Catholic representatives did disproportionately well in the first round of the triennial elections, while representatives of the Anglican church did even better because the 'unsectarians', representing so many different sects and interests, were slow to act as a party. The result was clerical dominance of many boards, even in unexpected places such as, most famously, Birmingham. Anglicans and Catholics very frequently allied to protect the interests of existing denominational schools. Boards with clerical majorities were often slow to build any, or enough, board schools, or to accept transfers of schools from, say, the BFSS; they frequently argued that there was vacant accommodation in their own schools that should be filled up first.¹⁷

Some educational reformers of long standing pointed out that the government had created the difficulty. It had originally proposed to include the voluntary schools in the rate aid, but had then amended the bill so as to establish the 'Dual System' of funding support. Francis Taylor, chairman of the Manchester Education Bill Committee, which was a formative influence on the successive education bills of 1867–70, criticised the government for not putting the voluntary schools on the rates under board surveillance, with a timetable conscience clause. This, he said, would have aligned their interests with those of the board schools, rather than creating a

¹⁶ Of these, one in nine was rejected and two in five were later withdrawn.

¹⁷ On the issue of transfers, see, e.g., *Nonconformist*, 20 December 1871, 1249.

‘vested interest’ to be defended by denominationalists.¹⁸ This was a powerful argument, but Taylor’s policy would not have solved the nonconformist grievance. Militant nonconformists were already showing that their objection was not primarily to the failure to create a uniform system (though many educationalists did greatly regret this);¹⁹ rather, their main concern was with their personal responsibility for the funding of priestcraft. They were angered even more by the decision to fund denominationalism from the rates (which involved personal assent by rate-payers to a new rate burden) than by the extension of the Privy Council system – which had, after all, been in operation since the 1830s. This was shown by the extraordinary zeal with which they took up the issue of ‘Clause 25’ of the 1870 Act.²⁰ The Act empowered boards to enforce compulsory attendance at school. As a corollary of compulsion, Clause 25 allowed school boards to pay, from the rates, the fees of parents at any school of the parents’ choice, if they were too poor to pay.

Clause 25 excited immense protest from nonconformists. They complained that clerical boards could use it to give substantial sums from the rates to Anglican schools, thus strengthening the denominational system and weakening the case for board schools. They pointed out that the Catholics were the other main beneficiaries of the clause. There was a strong Catholic presence in the three towns which made by far the most use of Clause 25, Manchester, Salford and Liverpool, and so Catholic schools received about a third of the total amount paid under it, nearly all the rest going to the church of England. Nonconformists alleged that rate support for Catholic denominational schools played into the hands of Irish bishops who were arguing – as we shall see – for concessions to the denominational system in that country. J. A. Picton told the Congregational Union that, applied in Ireland, Clause 25 would hand education over to the priests without check, something unacceptable in ‘even comparatively benighted Austria’.²¹

As a result, nonconformists created from Clause 25 a host of virtuous local battles, alleging that Anglican and Catholic denominationalists were combining, or were about to do so, in an unholy alliance of priestcraft. Irish involvement sometimes gave their case useful publicity: the *Nonconformist*

¹⁸ He argued this in a letter to *The Times*: 4 December 1871, 8.

¹⁹ This was one area in which the emphasis of the nonconformist associations differed from that of the National Education League, despite the fact that many of the same people supported both organisations.

²⁰ In fact Section 25, once the Act received royal assent, but it remained Clause 25 in nonconformist mythology.

²¹ *Nonconformist*, 24 May 1871, 529.

newspaper, adopting its usual tone of pained pacifist rationality, reported how a large meeting called at Merthyr Tydfil to protest against Clause 25 was infiltrated by 'a host of the worst class of Irish' who 'posted themselves in a commanding position' and let loose 'a torrent of ignorant passion' throughout the proceedings until the resolutions were carried, at which they 'indulged their vengeance in sportively and wantonly crushing a number of chairs'.²² Anti-Catholicism had its most striking effect at Liverpool, where there was a potent Orange reaction against the Anglican-Catholic alliance on the school board. At a school board by-election in January 1872 the Orangemen plumped for the Presbyterian candidate who supported unsectarian education, defeating the concurrent endowment candidate by over a thousand votes. That was a significant turning-point: in 1873 the anti-concurrent endowment party won a 9:6 majority on the board.²³ Moreover, the reaction against the denominationalist school board majorities in Liverpool and Manchester led directly to the formation of nonconformist associations in both towns, in Liverpool in December 1870 and in Manchester in February 1871. These aimed to form a permanent lobby protecting nonconformist interests and promoting the cause of religious equality. Thus they might repair the unsectarian disorganisation of 1870 – and fight back against the Tory success in Lancashire at the 1868 general election.

In fact, the Clause 25 agitation gave an immense fillip to local nonconformist cohesion and to Liberal Party organisation against denominationalism. In 1872, the Unitarian minister H. W. Crosskey, joint honorary secretary of the Central Nonconformist Committee, told the midlands conference of the Liberation Society that the Lancashire defeat of 1868 was a great warning: the Liberal Party 'would lose county after county if it gave ecclesiastics power over the people, and introduced priest or pastor into the school'.²⁴ The Central Nonconformist Committee had been formed in Birmingham in March 1870 to lobby against the clericalism of the Education Bill. After the shock defeat of the unsectarians at the 1870 Birmingham School Board election, it too had a major grievance, since the Birmingham Board wished to implement Clause 25. The Central Committee urged neighbouring midlands towns to form nonconformist associations: twenty-five had done so by March 1871.²⁵ But though Birmingham undoubtedly took the lead in politicising the issue, Clause 25 created a real threat in many towns which ensured action in any event. Attempts

²² Ibid., 11 October 1871, 994.

²³ Neil Collins, *Politics and Elections in Nineteenth-Century Liverpool* (Aldershot, 1994), 125; *Nonconformist*, 26 November 1873, 1172.

²⁴ *Nonconformist*, 2 October 1872, 1005. ²⁵ Ibid., 29 March 1871, 300.

by elements on the Wolverhampton and Halifax boards to implement the clause led to a fierce reaction, expressed at school board by-election victories for unsectarian candidates in December 1871. There was similar nonconformist feeling at Plymouth, where a board member resigned in protest at the decision to implement Clause 25 and forced a by-election at which the unsectarian forces triumphed.²⁶

In most towns with a substantial dissenting presence, nonconformists could exploit Clause 25 to make life too uncomfortable for Anglicans on boards. Nonconformists could ultimately refuse to pay rates for denominational support, as had the 'martyrs' in the struggle against church rates. By 1873 there were occasional reports of such protests, such as by the Baptist minister at Newmarket, some of whose goods were distrained as a result. Apparently most of the inhabitants refused to buy them at auction and so the sale raised little money.²⁷ But matters rarely reached that stage. In some towns with Liberal councils, such as Birmingham and Rochdale, the councils refused to give school boards the money necessary to pay the fees. The Birmingham Board went to the courts and after a long battle established its right to get the money, but eventually decided not to make payments to denominational schools, aware that this would give large numbers of nonconformists the opportunity for 'martyrdom' by refusing to pay rates.²⁸ In both cases the long legal struggle so polarised local opinion that the denominationalists were defeated at the 1873 board elections.²⁹ In most places, boards rejected sectarian controversy and deliberately sought compromise so that the constructive work of education could continue.³⁰ Clergymen tended to be anxious not to spark conflict with local nonconformist ministers.

The result was that most boards never implemented Clause 25, and, if they did, did so only to pay the fees of a very small number of poorer children.³¹ The London School Board set an important trend when, after much agonising, it decided in the autumn of 1871 not to pay fees to denominational schools except 'exceptionally, in the case of urgent and

²⁶ Ibid., 27 December 1871, 1265–6; 18 December 1872, 1285–6.

²⁷ Ibid., 25 June 1873, 651.

²⁸ A. Briggs, *History of Birmingham*, vol. II: *Borough and City 1865–1938* (London, 1952), 105.

²⁹ The Sunderland town council similarly refused to give the board the money to pay fees to denominations, arguing that it would create division in the town: *Nonconformist*, 22 November 1871, 1138.

³⁰ See, e.g., Robert Newton, *Victorian Exeter 1837–1914* (Leicester, 1968), 222.

³¹ In the year ending September 1873, school boards paid £5,850 for school fees, out of their total expenditure of £1,174,985. In 1872 Manchester School Board paid £2,471, Salford paid £934, Liverpool paid £818 and Bristol paid £320. But no other English board paid more than £100, only three paid more than £50 and only eleven others paid more than £10. See *Parliamentary Papers*, LII (1873), 271; LVIII (1875), 411.

temporary necessity', and without admitting the principle involved. This was a temporising formula which was generally recognised to be a defeat for denominationalism: for the *Nonconformist*, it 'marks the turn of the tide'.³² These 'exceptional' circumstances did not materialise, not just for religious reasons but because the board became fearful that a generous payment policy ran the risk of pauperising parents on the one hand and over-burdening rate-payers on the other.³³ By June 1874 the vast London Board had paid just £2 under Clause 25.³⁴ The London formula was adopted in many other towns.³⁵ Meanwhile a number of Liberal boards declared that they would remit the fees of children attending board schools but not pay fees to denominational schools.³⁶ The 1873 school board elections established unsectarian majorities in most of the northern and midland Liberal strongholds – not just in Birmingham and Rochdale but also in Bradford, Leeds and Nottingham. After those elections the *Nonconformist* pointed out that there were 'very few towns indeed' in which the church would be able to implement Clause 25 unless aided by Catholics, as in the major Lancashire boroughs.³⁷

In other words, Clause 25 had essentially been defeated by local political action in most urban areas, where Liberals were strong – while in Lancashire it was a mixed blessing for the Conservative Party, since the Anglican-Catholic coalition on fee payment weakened the party's ability to exploit the popular anti-Catholicism which had given it such success in 1868.³⁸ The Gladstone government, solicitous of parents' rights (and Catholic pressure), refused to repeal the clause; but 300 out of 425 Liberal candidates supported repeal at the 1874 election, and the rest were mostly in counties or Lancashire boroughs where it would have been foolish to declare for it. Thus, if we adopt a local perspective, we can see that the so-called 'nonconformist revolt' did not, as is often said, weaken the organisation of the Liberal Party; indeed

³² *Nonconformist*, 1 November 1871, 1073.

³³ *Ibid.*, 7 August 1872, 812–13; 30 October 1872, 1102, 1104.

³⁴ *Parliamentary Papers*, LI (1874), 449.

³⁵ E.g. *Nonconformist*, 15 November 1871, 1123 (Pembroke); 13 December 1871, 1221 (Croydon, Devonport).

³⁶ In September 1871, Portsmouth and Walsall school boards caused some controversy by announcing this: *Nonconformist*, 20 September 1871, 920. According to W. E. Forster, in July 1873, 64 of 212 boards which had put the compulsory bylaws in force had decided to remit fees in board schools but not pay them in voluntary schools. These boards represented one-tenth of the total population of areas under the compulsory bylaws: *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, 3rd series, CCXVII, 507, 17 July 1873. By then 212 of 563 boards had put the compulsory bylaws in force.

³⁷ *Nonconformist*, 31 December 1873, 1304; 3 December 1873, 1197. At Manchester, the Catholics gained one seat, leaving seven Anglicans, three Catholics and five unsectarians on the board: *ibid.*, 19 November 1873, 1155.

³⁸ For Conservative awkwardness in Liverpool, see Collins, *Politics and Elections*, 141.

it strengthened it. If anything, it increased the influence of nonconformists in local Liberal Party structures, and significant numbers of candidates for northern and midland towns adopted nonconformist rallying-cries in the run-up to the 1874 election.³⁹

However, the vigorous local struggle against Clause 25 was not enough for nonconformists. They desired, indeed needed, to formulate an 'imperial' strategy for the United Kingdom as a whole. Hence in April 1871 the three main nonconformist associations, the Central Nonconformist Committee and the Liverpool and Manchester Associations, began a series of joint meetings (usually at Crewe, this being the age of the railway). They agreed to urge the further spread of local nonconformist associations, to lobby the government for the repeal of Clause 25, and to convene a conference at Manchester to decide on a set of policies. Owing to the illness of the Prince of Wales, this conference was delayed until January 1872, when 1,885 delegates assembled at Manchester, including representatives from sixty-two local nonconformist associations, seventy-nine specially convened local meetings, and 800 church congregations and organisations in all.⁴⁰

There were a number of reasons why a general policy was necessary. Nonconformists knew that their disunion in 1870 had contributed to the flaws of the Education Act, and that they must start to speak with an agreed voice. They were aware that their concentration on opposition to Clause 25 was widely seen as carping, negative, jealous and sectarian. A number of them were sympathetic to the view that denominations, including their own, had done the country great damage in the past by placing obstacles in the way of a national system of education. They increasingly accepted the argument of liberal-radical educationalists that only a national system could civilise backward parts of the country – not least the Tory rural counties.

But the other reason for needing a policy was the European and Irish context. Most continental states had developed, or were developing, policies to check the growing pretensions of the Catholic church, especially in the educational field. These were generally seen to be enjoying some success.⁴¹ But they were using repressive state tactics that were not acceptable to nonconformists. They thus felt a particular responsibility to define a way of meeting this priestly threat that was compatible with their doctrine of religious equality. This was all the more important because of the

³⁹ Parry, *Democracy and Religion*, 399–401. ⁴⁰ See the *Report of the General Conference*.

⁴¹ The *Daily News* of 11 November 1871, 5, argued that the 'aggressive' claims of the Irish Catholic hierarchy to control education would not be countenanced in any European country, and cited the recent steps taken in Austria and Bavaria to check the 'exorbitances of the Bishops'.

behaviour of Cardinal Cullen in Ireland. In 1869, and several times since, the Irish Catholic hierarchy had reiterated the demand for a state-supported Catholic university or college in Ireland and for denominationalist reforms to the Irish national system of elementary education, claiming that mixed education endangered the 'faith and morals' of Catholics. In October 1871 the bishops asserted that 'educational equality' with English denominational schools was their constitutional right, and declared that they would oppose the election to parliament of candidates who would not uphold the principle of denominational education in Ireland.⁴² A Royal Commission had reported in 1870, suggesting that religious instruction for each denomination should be provided in Irish national schools. At the 1868 election Gladstone had very publicly recognised that the higher education opportunities for Irish Catholics who disliked the mixed colleges were inadequate. Therefore the government was expected to introduce legislation on elementary and higher education in Ireland. This was awaited with trepidation by those Liberals suspicious of papal pretensions, especially in the light of the Vatican Council declarations.

Most nonconformists asserted that the Irish laity were content with the national schools and the mixed colleges – and indeed that the priests were losing control over the lay mind, which was why they were, with increasing desperation, being driven to interference in elections in order to try to influence policy.⁴³ Cullen's ideas were not 'Irish ideas' but 'Italian' ones; he was asking the British tax-payer for the funds necessary to 'turn every school into a Papal chapel'.⁴⁴ But endowment of denominationalism in Britain was creating a legitimate and destructive grievance in Ireland: already Home Rule was emerging as a threat. Unity of feeling was the first condition of national safety and national happiness – as, again, the salutary example of France showed. What was needed was a policy that would bind the nation together on fair and equal terms.⁴⁵

The Manchester conference passed a number of resolutions on aspects of religious policy, but the most notable was the declaration in favour of the secular solution to the educational difficulty. The state should not provide religious teaching, however unsectarian, in any national system of education, anywhere in the United Kingdom; this should instead be the responsibility of voluntary effort. Moreover, the conference declared that nonconformists should not in normal circumstances support candidates

⁴² *The Times*, 21 October 1871, 3.

⁴³ *Nonconformist*, 6 December 1871, 1201. The controversy surrounding priestly behaviour at the Galway by-election in early 1872 later strengthened these arguments: *ibid.*, 19 June 1872, 645.

⁴⁴ G. Payne Jarvis, in *Report of the General Conference*, 224; *Nonconformist*, 24 January 1872, 93.

⁴⁵ *Report of the General Conference*, 66, 252.

for parliament who would not accept the need to amend the 1870 Act in line with the various conference resolutions: to repeal Clause 25, abolish state grants to schools under denominational rather than board management, and introduce the secular system in board schools. For England, the conference envisaged a national system of education under elected school boards, to which denominational schools would transfer in order to maintain their grant. Secularism would also be adopted in Scotland (for which an Education Bill was due in 1872) and Ireland. The denominations would provide whatever religious instruction they wished, at fixed times and on a voluntary basis.

The secular solution relieved nonconformists of the burden of giving tax or rate support to priestcraft, false doctrine and Tory propaganda. It also marked the rejection of the compromise of 'undenominational' teaching which earnest nonconformists thought hardly worth the name of religion, given the number of doctrinal compromises necessary to create something acceptable to such a wide variety of denominations. Moreover, Dale argued that the 'new establishment' of state-supported religious teaching was in some ways worse than the old one, because 'the necessity of having regenerate persons to teach Divine truth was ignored'.⁴⁶ Nonconformists had always believed that religious instruction by devout souls was necessary in order to bring man to an understanding of God's will. 'The training of the will to religious submission' could not be done by any state official; to help conquer sin, 'spiritual energy' was essential.⁴⁷ Only thus could the 'barbarism' of modern society – 'the wildness of the passions' endangering civilisation – be tackled.⁴⁸ Only by making English society truly religious could democracy fulfil its 'sacred mission', instead of presenting a danger to the 'higher freedom and life of mankind'.⁴⁹ The continental educational systems showed the dangers of leaving religion to be taught by state functionaries. In France and Germany, Voltairean 'bureaucrats' had been put in charge of religious education and, caring only to keep their state salaries, supplied mechanical and formulaic instruction. This had made Germany increasingly 'sceptical and infidel', while in France Christianity was presented in a 'perverted and debased form', with devastating effects on social cohesion.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Dale at the annual meeting of the Liberation Society, *Nonconformist*, 2 May 1872, 454.

⁴⁷ R. W. Dale, 'The Conference of Nonconformists', *British Quarterly Review* 55 (April 1872), 520–2.

⁴⁸ H. W. Crosskey, 'The Nonconformist Programme and Policy', *Theological Review* 9 (July 1872), 369.

⁴⁹ J. Baldwin Brown, 'The English Church and Dissenters', *Contemporary Review* 16 (January 1871), 320.

⁵⁰ See various opinions to this effect, quoted in *Nonconformist*, 2 May 1872, 452 (Holden), 454 (Rogers); 19 June 1872, 636 (Richard); 10 July 1872, 715 (White – not a secularist).

Dale and other leading nonconformists knew that Gladstone, who shared some of these views, had privately lauded the secular solution during the course of discussions about the 1870 bill; they must have been optimistic that in the long run they could persuade him to implement it. But, given political practicalities, there was no chance whatever of persuading him and Forster to dismantle the 1870 compromise in favour of secularism, at any rate for some years. Rather, the secularist declaration was surely intended primarily and explicitly as a guide and warning to the government in framing its Irish educational policy, due for unveiling in 1872 or 1873; indeed there is no other satisfactory explanation of why it was taken up so swiftly at the end of 1871.⁵¹ It was Ireland that preoccupied Dale the most in his ground-breaking lecture on *The Politics of Nonconformity* in Manchester in November 1871, and it was endowment of denominationalism in Ireland, not Clause 25, on which he then threatened that nonconformists would break up the party. The pretence of the Catholic bishops to speak as 'divinely-constituted guardians of faith and morals' reminded him of the outrageous claims of the late-medieval Catholic church; he asserted that the fight against them was no less urgent than the Reformation struggle in which the English people had first revealed their 'great qualities'.⁵² As the *Daily News* correspondent wrote of the Manchester conference: 'Cardinal Cullen has taken his whip in hand and driven them over in a body to secular education'.⁵³ At the meeting to form a London Nonconformist Committee in February 1872, Dr Edmond remarked that nonconformists had been undecided on their educational policy until Cardinal Cullen had 'opened their eyes'.⁵⁴

The vigour with which nonconformists adopted the conference resolutions, including secularism, was remarkable. There was no dissent at the conference, and there was a flowering of meetings in towns throughout the country to establish local nonconformist associations in the months to come. Once the London Nonconformist Committee had been formed, it joined the other three leading town associations in meetings to formulate general policy; in October 1872 they set up a committee to plan a strategy for the forthcoming election.⁵⁵ The Central Nonconformist Committee was still clearly the most active of the bodies, and sent deputations to meetings in other towns, to speak on behalf of the secularist cause.⁵⁶ But there was

⁵¹ In November 1871, Earl Russell joined the National Education League because George Dixon reassured him that the League did not advocate secularism, a declaration which caused embarrassment when the League converted to the secular solution in January 1872 and Russell made a high-profile resignation from it. *Nonconformist*, 22 November 1871, 1138.

⁵² Dale, *Politics of Nonconformity*, 25–9. ⁵³ *Daily News*, 24 January 1872, 3.

⁵⁴ *Nonconformist*, 21 February 1872, 186. ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 30 October 1872, 1095–6.

⁵⁶ See *ibid.*, 4 July 1872, 683, 686; 10 July 1872, 713; 1 January 1873, 5; 29 January 1873, 107.

definite and genuine enthusiasm for it in the localities; after all, nonconformists were not easily organised against their will. Therefore the culture of the nonconformist campaign remained different from that organised by the secular equivalent of the Central Nonconformist Committee, the National Education League, which has been much better studied and which, guided by the imperious and relatively impious will of Joseph Chamberlain, was more centralised and less representative.⁵⁷ Meetings of Congregationalists, Baptists, Unitarians and United Methodists also declared for secularism, with some objectors.⁵⁸

This enthusiasm also fuelled a drive for church disestablishment. The arguments in both cases were very similar. Nonconformists felt that their traditional criticisms of state support for priestcraft, or of the undoctrinal comprehension of the Liberal Anglicans, were being vindicated by the developments in educational policy. Moreover, the Bennett judgement in 1872, and the movement to allow confession in the church in 1873, both suggested that proto-Catholic practices could be forced on Anglican congregations. The growth of ritualism was also alarming because it showed the divisions within the establishment and its inability to agree on the fundamental truths essential to a religious life.⁵⁹ Dale told a Birmingham meeting of the Liberation Society in October 1872 that a 'comprehensive church' was 'a church which took everybody in'.⁶⁰ Ritualism demonstrated the same message as passionless erastianism or country-clergyman apathy: that the church was a body more concerned with endowments and materialism than with inculcating spirituality, developing the Protestant conscience and saving the nation from infidelity and decay.⁶¹ In May 1873 the *Nonconformist* remarked that the conflict over disestablishment was one 'between the material and spiritual elements of English life'.⁶² In 1872 the veteran Liberation Society activist Edward Miall claimed that 'if Christianity is not to be killed by the Establishment, Christianity must kill the Establishment'.⁶³

In 1871 Miall had moved in the Commons for the disestablishment of all churches in the United Kingdom, collecting eighty-nine votes. Neither Gladstone nor Disraeli argued against the motion on grounds of high

⁵⁷ For the League, see F. Adams, *History of the Elementary School Contest in England*, ed. A. Briggs (Brighton, 1972 edn); Hamer, *Politics of Electoral Pressure*, 122–38; and P. Auspos, 'Radicalism, Pressure Groups, and Party Politics: From the National Education League to the National Liberal Federation', *Journal of British Studies* 20 (1980), 184–204.

⁵⁸ *Nonconformist*, 8 May 1872, 487; 29 May 1872, 568–9; 19 and 26 June 1872, 638, 658; 14 August 1872, 833–4.

⁵⁹ E.g. *ibid.*, 19 June 1872, 633; 10 December 1873, 1213. ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 9 October 1872, 1025.

⁶¹ On the latter see Tillett at Ipswich, in *ibid.*, 22 October 1873, 1047.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 1 May 1873, 421. ⁶³ *Ibid.*, 2 October 1872, 1005.

principle, as was widely noted. Gladstone told the nonconformists that the people of England did not yet agree with them and that they must go out and convert them before the issue became a practical one.⁶⁴ It was hardly surprising that they took up the invitation. The Liberation Society held 222 meetings in 1872 and 269 in 1873.⁶⁵ Paid touring lecturers handled the bulk of these, while leading ministers like Dale, Rogers and Baldwin Brown gave high-profile and intellectually weighty lectures. Momentum seemed on the side of the disestablishment campaign. In the light of parliamentary reform, nonconformist agitation, the loosening of the church–state nexus, the divergence of parties within the church, the growth of ritualism and the free church movements on the continent, it seemed a logical next step; very many people thought it inevitable sooner or later. Miall introduced two more motions in 1872 and 1873, and in May 1873 the Crewe meeting of the main nonconformist associations urged ‘decided political action’ to advance disestablishment, including ‘every effort to return supporters of religious equality’ at the next election. Like the Liberation Society, they stopped short of requiring all Liberal candidates to pledge for disestablishment, knowing that that would be counter-productive in less advanced areas, such as the counties, where it would merely provoke a Conservative reaction. Nonetheless, both bodies saw the general election as a ‘great educational agency’ and had little doubt that nonconformist pressure would result in a great increase in the proportion of Liberal MPs committed to religious equality.⁶⁶

However, this nonconformist challenge to the church set off a profound reaction in favour of the institutional support of biblical Christianity as a symbol of Protestantism and nationhood, which secularism and disestablishment threatened. This reaction came in a number of different forms, which were bound up to a greater or lesser extent with the reviving Conservative Party.

The most uncompromising response was to disrupt Liberation Society meetings. Since speaker meetings depended entirely on argument and declamation, it was not difficult for opposing groups to drown the lecturer’s words in noise. The most common way to do this was by patriotic songs, principally ‘God save the Queen’ and ‘Rule Britannia’.⁶⁷ However,

⁶⁴ *Hansard*, CCVI, 571, 9 May 1871.

⁶⁵ S. M. Ingham, ‘The Disestablishment Movement in England, 1868–74’, *Journal of Religious History* 3 (1964–5), 52.

⁶⁶ *Nonconformist*, 4 June 1873, 564; 18 June 1873, 611.

⁶⁷ E.g. at Reading, Rawtenstall and Macclesfield: *ibid.*, 20 March 1872, 291; 22 May 1872, 539; 27 November 1872, 1200.

beyond these symbolic tunes almost any well-known ditty would do. At Stalybridge in November 1870, Carvell Williams' lecture was suppressed by a forty-five-minute concert of Christmas carols, 'Bacchanalian praises of John Barleycorn', 'Tommy Dodd' and other songs.⁶⁸ In February 1873 a party infiltrated a Liberation Society meeting at Exeter using forged tickets, and, as well as letting loose a large number of sparrows into the hall, offered a twenty-minute chorus, including 'Johnny comes marching home' and 'Down in a coalmine', together with rattles, whistles and cock-crows.⁶⁹ It was no coincidence that a good many of these demonstrations occurred in Lancashire towns that had witnessed Anglo-Irish tension: at Ashton, Rawtenstall, Wigan and Oldham. In 1868, 'Murphy riots' had taken place at Ashton, Stalybridge and Oldham, begun by local Irishmen in protest at the inflammatory anti-Catholic lectures of William Murphy and his Protestant Electoral Union.⁷⁰ These had polarised local politics on sectarian lines and weakened the cause of disestablishment, in Ireland and England, by making it look anti-Protestant. After Carvell Williams' lecture had been stopped at Stalybridge in 1870, the leader of the insurgents had a motion carried that Liberation Society meetings were 'unworthy of toleration' because they fostered 'a spirit of infidelity and encourage Romanism'.⁷¹

Most of the interruptions at that meeting were from 17–20-year-old youths; similarly at Oldham they were from 'lads in clogs'.⁷² But agitators were by no means exclusively working-class. At Rawtenstall a few of the 'gang of roughs... bore the outward appearance of gentlemen'.⁷³ The miscreants at Exeter apparently included articled clerks and other young professionals.⁷⁴ At Blackheath, G. W. Conder's lecture was interrupted by thirty youths from a local church school (the Manchester conference had also demanded an end to clerical bias in the administration of the endowments of middle-class schools).⁷⁵ At Kettering, Conder had to shout above a constant peal of church bells throughout his lecture, remarking that 'the ringers must have had a warm job'.⁷⁶ At a Cambridge meeting the opposition to the Liberation Society set off crackers and released 'some noxious acid' which created 'a most disgusting stench'; at Macclesfield a similarly disruptive smell resembled 'burnt cayenne pepper'.⁷⁷

⁶⁸ Ibid., 23 November 1870, 1115.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 26 February 1873, 203–4.

⁷⁰ See W. L. Arnstein, 'The Murphy Riots: A Victorian Dilemma', *Victorian Studies* 19 (1975–6), 51–71; H. J. Hanham, *Elections and Party Management: Politics in the time of Disraeli and Gladstone* (Hassocks, 1978 edn), 303–8.

⁷¹ *Nonconformist*, 23 November 1870, 1115.

⁷² Ibid., 30 November 1870, 1134; 25 January 1871, 98.

⁷³ Ibid., 22 May 1872, 539.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 26 February 1873, 203.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 7 March 1872, 236.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 8 March 1871, 223.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 22 March 1871, 271; 27 November 1872, 1200.

Some of the anti-nonconformist feeling, especially the working-class element, was undoubtedly stimulated by publicans who also disliked the Liberal government's licensing reforms: 'Beer and the Bible' was not an uncommon Tory electoral slogan. The Exeter brewer Joseph Harding, for example, was a leading figure in the local Church Defence Institution and some of his employees were accused of ruffianism at meetings.⁷⁸ However, it would be too reductionist to ascribe either the 'Bible cry' or the general Conservative reaction just to the drink trade, or indeed to anti-Irish sentiment.⁷⁹ Some of it was an early signal of the emergence of a laddish lower-middle-class or undergraduate Toryism critical of nonconformist piety and prudery, something also evident in the funfair atmosphere of the jingo meetings of 1878, in which medical students played a significant part.⁸⁰ Much of it was doubtless a response to the emergence of an apparently threatening local nonconformist–Liberal political organisation. However one characterises the reaction, it clearly demonstrated the ability of local Conservatives to use the church and Bible issues to exploit a sense of identity in opposition to the politics of nonconformity and institutional radicalism.

The same can be said of the second level of the anti-nonconformist reaction, the establishment of numerous branches of the Church Defence Institution. The Church Institution had been formed in 1859 in order to resist local nonconformist pressure for the abolition of church rates, but had lost its sense of purpose as abolition became a *fait accompli* in the mid-1860s reform crisis. The Liberation Society campaign for disestablishment led to a revival and marked extension of its operations, dating from a meeting in July 1871: the number of branches rose from 100 to 450 between 1871 and the 1874 election.⁸¹ The organisation, renamed the Church Defence Institution, relaunched a monthly newspaper, the *National Church*, in January 1872: circulation grew from 3,853 in that month to 20,000 two years later. 'Defence not defiance' was its motto: it presented itself as the passive victim of a partisan attack by an outside force, appealing to the Englishman's sense of 'fair play' that both sides of the argument should be heard.⁸² The

⁷⁸ Newton, *Victorian Exeter*, 190–2.

⁷⁹ For caution about the role of publicans in the Liberal defeat of 1874, see Hanham, *Elections and Party Management*, 222–7; B. Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians: The Temperance Question in England, 1815–1872* (London, 1971), 269–75.

⁸⁰ There were coconut shies, games of leapfrog, brass bands, etc. See the evidence in H. Cunningham, 'Jingoism in 1877–78', *Victorian Studies* 14 (1970–1), 441, 444, 449–51.

⁸¹ M. J. D. Roberts, 'Pressure-Group Politics and the Church of England: The Church Defence Institution, 1859–1896', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 35 (1984), 571.

⁸² *The National Church: A Monthly Record of Church Work and of the Proceedings of the Church Defence Institution Throughout the Country*, 1/145 (July 1872); 3/53 (March 1874).

Institution followed the strategy of the Liberation Society, with nine paid lecturers addressing local meetings on the benefits of a church establishment and the errors in the nonconformist case – refuting, for example, the fact that clergy were paid out of taxation. Between February and June 1872 it distributed 246,000 pamphlets; at the 1874 election alone it sent 130,000 placards and leaflets out to constituencies.⁸³ The decision in May 1873 by the four main nonconformist associations to emphasise electoral action led the Institution to work towards forming local offices in each constituency, recognising that the future of the establishment would be settled at the polls rather than in parliament.⁸⁴ It encouraged its branches to warn MPs about the electoral consequences of declaring for disestablishment, and with pride announced in March 1874 that fifty-two of those who had voted for Miall's motions had not been returned to the new parliament.⁸⁵ But ostensibly, at least, it remained above political party,⁸⁶ as it did, more successfully, above ecclesiastical faction: indeed it saw one of its most important tasks as being to group all sections of the church in a common defence movement.

The Institution was essentially an establishment organisation: twenty-two bishops gave their blessing to it, and meetings tended to be addressed by local clergymen and landowners.⁸⁷ It trumpeted the existence of a working-men's committee in London, which attempted to set up working-men's branches elsewhere. It was not very successful, but then nor was the Liberation Society's equivalent, to which it was a response, but which had effectively died by late 1872.⁸⁸ With occasional exceptions, the Institution, and the parish clergy, distanced themselves from church–state ruffianism and argued for free speech for both sides in the local debates: indeed in

⁸³ *The Church Defence Institution: Minutes of Proceedings at the Meeting... June 29, 1872* (1872), 6; *National Church*, 3/53 (March 1874).

⁸⁴ *Nonconformist*, 6 August 1873, 779.

⁸⁵ *National Church*, 3/54 (March 1874).

⁸⁶ The *National Church* noted that of the eight men who proposed resolutions at an Institution meeting in Cambridge, four were Liberals: 1/69, 79 (April 1872).

⁸⁷ For example, the meeting to establish a branch in Carlisle in October 1872 was presided over by the bishop of Carlisle, and there was 'an influential audience': *The Times*, 19 October 1872, 10.

⁸⁸ Ingham, 'Disestablishment Movement', 47–51; *Report of the London Working Men's Council for Church Defence for the Year 1875* (1876). There were two reasons for the attempts to establish working-men's movements on each side. The most important was the obvious one of trying to spread interest in the campaigns among the new electorate. But there also appears to have been a recognition that working-men could bring a more powerful physical presence and a less pacifist approach to the local debates than could the sedate mainstream organisations. The only reference that I have found to nonconformists attacking Institution meetings was when the working-men of Leeds broke up an Institution lecture in retaliation for an attack on a Liberation Society meeting by Conservative working-men: *Nonconformist*, 6 December 1871, 1191.

a number of places clergymen entered into formal public exchanges with Liberation speakers.⁸⁹

Working-class sympathy with the 'church in danger' argument was by no means negligible,⁹⁰ but the reaction in favour of church and Bible was led by the propertied and middle classes. It was no less politically effective for that. The Conservative victory at the general election of 1874, their first for thirty-three years, was won in the counties, the rural boroughs, London and its middle-class suburbs. The church defence cry was undoubtedly one of its essential components, as a series of previous by-elections had shown.⁹¹ Gladstone's warning to Miall in the 1872 debate on disestablishment had been vindicated: that an immense number of long-standing social, family and propertied as well as religious interests were bound up with the church establishment and that it would be foolish to launch a premature attack on it.⁹²

In the same debate, Gladstone also remarked that advanced nonconformists were mistaken to think that Englishmen's dislike of the papal aggression would have the same effect as on the continent, that is, to make them more willing to take up the idea of free churches. Rather, the turbulent state of religio-political affairs abroad seemed more likely to have created a 'reaction' among Englishmen, increasing their attachment to the church establishment as an effective preacher of religion, agent of social stability, and symbol of national identity.⁹³ The arguments of defenders of the establishment certainly played on the idea that the national church was necessary to the nation's health. They stressed the importance of keeping a minister in each parish, as a spiritual guide to the poor and the best guarantor of social morality. Nonconformists, they argued, had failed to evangelise or educate the poor, and had deserted the inner cities for middle-class

⁸⁹ Ibid., 30 November 1870, 1134; 15 March 1871, 247; 19 February 1873, 181. See *National Church*, 1/70 (1872).

⁹⁰ And not just in Lancashire: F. W. Hirst, *Early Life and letters of John Morley*, 2 vols. (London, 1927), I, 297.

⁹¹ On the church defence issue at the 1874 general election, and the 1873 London School Board elections, see Parry, *Democracy and Religion*, 404–7. Important parliamentary by-elections beforehand included those at Plymouth in November 1871, when the Liberal Party put up a Liberationist candidate, leading Liberal Anglicans to withhold their votes and lose the party the seat (*Nonconformist*, 29 November 1871, 1168–9), the North-West Riding, shortly after the 1872 Manchester conference, when the Liberationist Isaac Holden was defeated by the Conservative (and church defence activist) F. S. Powell, on the 'two great principles of opposition to secular education and disestablishment', and North Nottinghamshire, lost in the same month on a similar issue (Parry, *Democracy and Religion*, 338–9). In the spring of 1872, secularists stood in four London School Board by-elections, but three were heavily defeated and one withdrew before the poll.

⁹² *Hansard*, CCXII, 575, 2 July 1872. ⁹³ Ibid., 576.

enclaves.⁹⁴ Disestablishment would remove a prop of social cohesion and increase the prospects of both infidelity and Romanism, and thus of a French-style collapse into moral anarchy. Irish church disestablishment had allowed the Catholic priests to win more influence in Irish elections. The connection between state, church and property also checked immorality in the upper classes, making them the most responsible in Europe, and helped to preserve British public life from the chicanery and vulgarity of American politics.⁹⁵ Secular education would drive the teaching of religion into the Sunday schools and into priestly hands, and would create more sectarianism, less efficiency and the 'demoralisation and de-civilisation of the people'.⁹⁶ The Bible opened the 'heart and soul' and lifted the imagination; it was nonconformists' jealousy of the church's success in education that had driven them to the 'revolutionary' policy of excluding it from the school timetable.⁹⁷ Biblical Christianity had defined the nation's character and history. These views were extremely widely held.⁹⁸ Indeed they were held by many nonconformists, especially Wesleyans, who had never been enthusiastic about disestablishment and who were alarmed by the proposal of secular education. The Wesleyan William McArthur said that the Bible had 'made our nation what it was'.⁹⁹ In 1856, Miall himself had remarked that to propose a national education scheme based on secularism would unite in opposition all the classes 'which constituted the moral power of the country'.¹⁰⁰ After the 1874 election, Chamberlain remarked that many nonconformists had been 'carried over to the enemy by the "Bible" cry'.¹⁰¹

This may have been the case with some Liberal Wesleyans, and was certainly true of some staunch Liberal Anglicans. However, many Liberals found it impossible to defect to the Tories, and instead attempted to rally the Liberal Party around the principles of criticising clerical denominationalism

⁹⁴ See, e.g., Gathorne Hardy, in *Nonconformist*, 23 November 1870, 1115 and *The Times*, 1 February 1873, 12; *Principles and Objects of the Church Defence Institution* (n.d. [London, 1871]), 6.

⁹⁵ On Ireland, see, e.g., *Church Defence Institution Meeting June 29, 1872*, 10. On France and the USA see, e.g., *National Church*, 1/125 (June 1872) and (on the USA) Lord George Manners at Ely, in *The Times*, 1 February 1873, 12. On the unparalleled 'religious responsibilit[y]' of the English upper classes, see Lord Devon at Torquay in *ibid.*, 20 November 1872, 7.

⁹⁶ See Bishop Fraser, quoted in *Nonconformist*, 2 October 1872, 1011; *National Church*, 2/62 (March 1873).

⁹⁷ *Spectator*, 27 January 1872, 101–2.

⁹⁸ For press criticism of the secularist policy see *Nonconformist*, 31 January 1872, 123, and Parry, *Democracy and Religion*, 335.

⁹⁹ *Nonconformist*, 1 March 1871, 202. ¹⁰⁰ Hansard, CXL, 2003, 6 March 1856.

¹⁰¹ A. Peel (ed.), *Letters to a Victorian Editor: Henry Allon Editor of the 'British Quarterly Review'* (London, 1929), 43.

(such as in opposing Clause 25), defending undenominational education, ridiculing talk of imminent disestablishment and in some cases urging the state to use its power over the church to check the growth of ritualism. In fact, the great debate about education weakened the Wesleyans' defence of their voluntary schools, and made them much more sympathetic to an undenominational national system. One charismatic preacher told the Wesleyan Conference that to march under that banner, rather than 'the Pope's banner' or the banner of the 'infidels', would allow the Methodist, as he lay dying, to receive 'from above the blessing of God, and from below the blessing of the poor'.¹⁰²

In their opposition to secularism they were most definitely not alone among Liberals. Even many radicals attempted to undo the damage caused by the nonconformist declaration in favour of secularism. As he rejoined the cabinet in August 1873, John Bright told Chamberlain that it was abundantly clear that 'the public... are in favour of some religious teaching'.¹⁰³ Henry Fawcett publicly poured scorn on nonconformists' 'miserable' religious scruples, claiming that they were obstructing the work of national education.¹⁰⁴ By late 1873, the secular cry was little heard in Liberal politics. One important reason for this was the impasse in government Irish policy, after Gladstone's compromise Irish University Bill had been sensationally defeated in parliament in March 1873 owing to its failure to satisfy either the Irish Catholics or the most zealous defenders of mixed education.¹⁰⁵ Gladstone made it clear that he would no longer seek to address the Irish Catholic grievance, or pacify the bishops. At the same time, the unpopularity of secularism as a policy for school boards in Britain had become only too clear. No board of any consequence had adopted it: indeed by 1888 less than two dozen English school boards were operating on a secular basis.¹⁰⁶ The great majority of those boards which had settled on a religious education policy by March 1872 had declared for Bible teaching – following the London Board – and only a small minority had opted for even

¹⁰² William Arthur at the 1872 Wesleyan Conference: *Nonconformist*, 21 August 1872, 857. The conference appointed a committee to consider whether to amend the traditional policy of maintaining Wesleyan schools within the denominational system. In December 1872 it recommended supporting future national unsectarian legislation and building no new denominational schools, while continuing the existing ones: *Nonconformist*, 11 December 1872, 1260.

¹⁰³ J. L. Garvin, *The Life of Joseph Chamberlain*, vol. I: 1836–1885 (London, 1932), 141.

¹⁰⁴ *Hansard*, CCXVII, 578–83, 17 July 1873. John Morley told Chamberlain that many radicals agreed with Fawcett: 23 July 1873, Joseph Chamberlain papers, University Library, Birmingham, 5/54/4.

¹⁰⁵ Parry, *Democracy and Religion*, 353–68.

¹⁰⁶ J. Murphy, *Church, State and Schools in Britain, 1800–1970* (London, 1971), 69. There were 2,225 boards in England and Wales at the time.

the semi-radical policy of reading the Bible without note or comment.¹⁰⁷ An influential body of nonconformists centred in London had organised a protest against the secular policy in the early summer of 1872: 1,950 of them eventually signed a petition against it, including famous preachers such as Newman Hall and Spurgeon.¹⁰⁸ The leading Unitarian James Martineau said that secularism would play into the hands of priests and parsons, while the teaching of the Bible was the best way to create a common basis for national Christianity.¹⁰⁹ Scottish Liberals were even less inclined to accept secularism: the overwhelming dominance of Presbyterian religion north of the border meant that there was a general consensus on the value of religious teaching in schools.

But attempts to rally the Liberal Party on undenominational principles could not disguise continuing divisions and confusion on education policy. Nor could they disguise the increasing success of nonconformists in converting Liberal candidates in many northern and midland boroughs to the disestablishment cause. Conservative reaction gained much strength from the fear that nonconformists' organised agitation, buttressed by the caucus, would, sooner or later, force the Liberal leadership to convert to its policies. Chamberlain's adoption of a 'free church' policy in 1873 helped Tories to suggest that advanced Liberals were planning to impose disestablishment and secularism on the country. So did the vainglorious behaviour of the National Education League in 1873, when it put up a candidate at the Bath by-election against the official Liberal, in order to protest against the government's unwillingness to move towards a truly national education system. Though the League was campaigning for many changes besides secularism, it was associated with it, and secularism was the official policy of the Liberals at the Birmingham School Board election in late 1873. Their caucus-inspired victory was a major propaganda coup for the Conservatives at the 1874 general election.¹¹⁰ But in fact Tories did not need Liberal secularism in order to promote themselves as the only defenders of the Bible. Ever since 1870 they had also described the extreme unsectarian policy of

¹⁰⁷ Of forty-six boards, thirty-eight, representing a population of over six million, had adopted the former, and eight, representing a population of less than 200,000, the latter: Forster, *Hansard*, CIX, 1436, 5 March 1872. In line with Gladstone's intentions, the 1870 Act actually allowed teaching of more definite doctrine, in addition to the Bible, but most boards were so keen to avoid controversy between the sects that this was soon forgotten: Murphy, *Church, State*, 59, 66–8.

¹⁰⁸ *Nonconformist*, 15 May 1872, 505, 509; 31 July 1872, 787; Parry, *Democracy and Religion*, 336. There were originally 800 signatures and so the group was often known as 'the eight hundred'.

¹⁰⁹ *Nonconformist*, 29 May 1872, 568–9.

¹¹⁰ Secularism failed in Birmingham owing to the lack of suitable teachers, and was abandoned in 1879: N. J. Richards, 'Religious Controversy and the School Boards, 1870–1902', *British Journal of Educational Studies* 18 (1970), 192.

reading the Bible without note or comment as the 'no Bible' position. Several school board debates in boroughs with a strong radical party turned on a contest between that policy and the church's preferred model of Bible *teaching*.¹¹¹ In 1870 the Birmingham Tory Sebastian Evans satirically portrayed a National Education League school, run on unsectarian principles, as a bleak one where 'to pray to God was to break the law'.¹¹² All in all, the Conservative Party was able to make a great deal of electoral capital, in many parts of the country, out of the twin cries of the 'Bible in the school' and 'the church in danger'.

At one level, this chapter has shown that the debates about the place of religion in education and the state were intricately connected with local party politics. Even when the language was explicitly religious, much of the subtext was political. Nonconformists were worried about Anglican dominance of the education system, not least because it strengthened Conservatism. Despite the non-partisanship of its presentation, the Church Defence Institution, like the other campaigners against the Liberation Society, was motivated by a concern that the Society was ultimately a political organisation, against which political mobilisation was necessary.

Indeed the conflicts of 1871–4 strengthened the organisation of both political parties – at a time when both were trying to come to terms with, and appeal to, a greatly extended urban electorate. For all their complaining, the Clause 25 issue helped Liberal nonconformists in many towns to increase their power. But the main effect of this was to strengthen nonconformist influence within the Liberal Party rather than to win extra seats, since these were towns in which Liberals were already dominant. The main political consequence of the religious disputes was that they assisted the Conservative revival. The Conservative victory at the general election of 1874 was their first since 1841. Conservatives were the real beneficiaries of the alarm that disestablishment and secular education would promote ungodliness in Britain. The increasing strength of the Conservative Party in the 1870s and 1880s owed a lot to its appeal to those who identified it with respectability, order and the religious, political and moral establishment, and its defence of the church was a crucial part of that image.

But though the partisan aspect of these disputes was crucial, they also inflamed opinion because they raised a fundamental issue about 'Englishness'. How was the Protestantism, which was one of the great glories of

¹¹¹ For example, Leicester and Huddersfield: see *Nonconformist*, 17 April 1872, 403.

¹¹² Adams, *History of Elementary School Contest*, xxi.

the nation, to be defined, defended and propagated? When a Nottingham lecture by the Liberationist preacher Charles Williams was disrupted by church roughs singing 'God save the Queen', Williams pointed out that they hardly knew the words. Accordingly, when the meeting had voted overwhelmingly for disestablishment, the entire body of 3,000 nonconformists joined in a lusty, heartfelt and accurate rendition of the national anthem.¹¹³ The debate about education and establishment was a debate about different ways of articulating the religious aspect of national identity, in the light of a powerful distrust of Catholicism and continentalism. The nonconformists studied in this chapter claimed to have the only solution to the problem of priestcraft that would suit the needs of a free and Protestant nation. They saw themselves as true patriots in two senses: they were defenders of the historic ideal of English liberty of conscience, yet also alive to the need to defend the Union by binding Ireland to it on fair and equal terms. But, in developing their solution, they opened themselves to the charge of being opponents of religion, whose proposals would strengthen the sectarianism, Romanism and infidelity that they saw as so evil. In the context of the alarming pace of political and religious change at home and abroad, that charge was convincing not only to very many Anglicans but also to some influential nonconformists, who were beginning to feel that forty years of political struggle had solved most of their practical grievances. Increasingly, they felt, materialism and infidelity threatened all religion; in that context, areas of disagreement between church and dissent were relatively insignificant, especially given the growth of earnestness in the church since the 1830s.

In any event, the spiritual intensity of the nonconformist argument for religious equality was difficult to communicate to the electorate. Though the number of adherents of disestablishment in the Liberal parliamentary party grew by 1885, the issue lost its vitality; for many candidates it was probably a ritual slogan. For the opposition, however, it was a godsend. It was the Conservatives who did most to stimulate, and who benefited most from, the revival of the 'church in danger' cry at the 1885 election. Not surprisingly, English church disestablishment was never again to be a major practical issue. Nor was the 'new Establishment' of state-supported religious teaching ever dismantled. Too many people believed that a fundamental duty of the English state was to uphold the idea of a biblical education. Undenominational teaching became the norm in the vast majority of board schools, which became more and more widespread. Undenominationalism

¹¹³ *Nonconformist*, 1 May 1873, 429.

was generally uncontroversial in England and Scotland – though it did nothing to ease Anglo-Irish tension.¹¹⁴

For many Anglicans, the defence of institutionalised Protestantism was a great and necessary declaration of the moral basis of the state and of English national identity. On the other hand, many intensely religious nonconformists saw it as a victory for those aspects of English public life of which they despaired: propertied vested interests, false religion and self-satisfied superciliousness. The survival of the church establishment on an increasingly undoctinal and comprehensive basis was to them a triumph for materialism and secular ideals. It would be rash to conclude that either side was entirely wrong. The conflict of the 1870s did not realise the ideal of a 'free church in a free state' that so many had thought inevitable in 1870. If anything, it consolidated the Liberal Anglican idea of a parliamentary church in a parliamentary state – a victory of latitudinarianism over zeal which was arguably, for all the nonconformists' rhetoric, the most English of solutions.

¹¹⁴ In Liverpool the Liberal–Catholic alliance started to break down in 1871–4 because of the Liberal criticism of the school board's implementation of Clause 25. This assisted the growth of a local Home Rule Party: there were five Irish Nationalist councillors in Liverpool by 1877: F. Neal, *Sectarian Violence: The Liverpool Experience, 1819–1914: An Aspect of Anglo-Irish History* (Manchester, 1988), 185.

CHAPTER 7

*The assault on the city of Levites: Spain**

Julio de la Cueva

It is known that the Spanish Catholic church has been one of the most powerful churches of Western Europe over the centuries. Yet, in spite of its strength, liberal revolutions were able to undermine considerably the foundations upon which ecclesiastical power had been built in Spain since the Middle Ages. In the transition from the old to the new regime, the Spanish church suffered severe losses that badly affected its economic, human and pastoral resources, as well as its traditional political and social influence. From 1812 to 1837, constitutional freedoms were proclaimed, the Inquisition was suppressed, the tithe was abolished, the religious orders were disbanded and their properties sold at public auction, the ecclesiastical presence in the fields of charity and education was nearly dismantled, the church was at the mercy of the civil authorities, and in some places – such as Madrid in 1834 or Catalonia in 1835 – at the mercy of angry crowds. To make matters worse for relations between the Catholic church and the liberal state, a great number of clerics embraced the legitimist cause, thus championing the return of absolutist rule, during the first Carlist War (1833–40).

Only very slowly did the Spanish clergy regain their lost positions. Undoubtedly the worst had passed when the Moderates returned to office in 1844 and a Concordat was signed in 1851. The Concordat recognised the Catholic church as the established church and committed the state to financing it. In exchange, the church accepted the *fait accompli* of the disentanglement of its properties. From then on, Spanish Catholicism began to rebuild the foundations of its previous power, but its recovery was twice disturbed by revolutions, in 1854 and 1868. The former completed the disentailing process, nationalising the secular clergy's possessions. The latter overthrew the Bourbon dynasty and heralded a six-year period of political and social turmoil, which had a very negative impact on the church. At the beginning, local revolutionary juntas took anticlerical measures that would

* The author would like to thank Francesca Brizi for her professional assistance in editing the text.

later be ratified by the government and the 1869 constitution: freedom of worship, the disbanding of the Jesuits, restrictions on religious orders and the introduction of civil marriage rites, among others. For the church, and the other conservative forces, the 1873 Republic was the limit of disorder they were prepared to tolerate.

Hence, the restoration of the monarchy in 1875 was welcomed with relief by a church that had been shaken by the menace of revolution. The Restoration (1875–1923) was the longest phase of political stability in the history of modern Spain, and it would prove extremely advantageous for the Spanish church. The Restoration political system, engineered by Conservative leader Antonio Cánovas del Castillo, needed the support of all the moderate forces, including Catholicism, to protect itself against radical attitudes from both extremes. Accordingly, the government (both Conservative and even Liberal cabinets until 1901) took great pains to achieve a peaceful co-existence with the church and favour it as much as possible. In addition, the Catholic hierarchy became convinced of the need to condone and accommodate to the moderate liberal regime of the Restoration as a ‘lesser evil’. Ecclesiastical objectives were to avoid the ‘greater evil’ of republican or socialist revolution, to carry out a programme of self-recovery and to launch a Christian re-conquest of society.¹ Thus, the Spanish episcopate’s agenda was very similar to Leo XIII’s policy of *ralliement* and had much in common with the European religious revival of the second half of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, this harmonious association between church and state, and the undisturbed recovery of the former’s traditionally privileged positions within Spanish society would come to an abrupt end around the turn of the century. It was anticlerical mobilisation, mostly driven by radical Republicans, that brought religion back into the Spanish political arena. In 1901, the Liberal Party, one of the two political groups taking turns in power, decided for the first time in twenty-five years to endorse secularising policies.

SANTANDER: A TALE OF TWO CITIES

‘*Ciudad levítica*’ (‘Levitical city’, ‘city of Levites’) was an expression favoured by nineteenth-century writers to describe the kind of provincial town whose collective life had remained untouched by modernity and, therefore, was still arranged along the patterns established by the Roman Catholic church.

¹ R. A. H. Robinson, ‘Political Conservatism: The Spanish Case’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 14 (1979), 561–80; Cristóbal Robles, *Insurrección o legalidad. Los católicos y la Restauración* (Madrid, 1988), 243–95.

There were many 'Levitical' cities in Spain: towns that measured their days by the pace marked by the belfries, whose inhabitants lived their lives according to the instructions issued from the pulpits. And, although there may no longer be 'Levitical' towns in Spain today, the adjective can still be found in the 2001 edition of the *Spanish Royal Academy Dictionary* meaning 'fond of the Church or subservient to the clergy'. This definition is, not surprisingly, very close to one the same dictionary offers for the noun 'clericalism' ('marked attachment and submission to the clergy'). In fact, in Spain, when literary polemic gave way to militancy, the latter term was the one preferred by intellectuals and politicians struggling with the church for the leadership of society. A typically 'Levitical' city could thus also be characterised, in a less amiable manner, as 'a citadel of clerical reaction'.² Thus, in nineteenth-century Spain, one could find 'Levitical' cities and 'clerical' citadels, but one could also encounter secular armies willing to put them to siege and, eventually, to occupy them. Santander, the object of our case study, was most certainly one of these cities.

Santander, a 50,000-inhabitant commercial and fishing port in northern Spain, was, in fact, the very 'citadel of clerical reaction' that has just been mentioned. We owe this rhetorical definition to the committee in charge of organising the founding meeting of the Radical Party (*Partido Republicano Radical*), on 6 January 1908. The national leader of this party, Alejandro Lerroux, derived much of his appeal to the masses from his vehemently anticlerical arguments, and his proxies and followers were no less anticlerical than their leader. Therefore, their choice of Santander as a setting for the founding meeting of the Spanish party that advocated the most profound secularisation of society may not have been accidental. In the minds of the Spanish people, the city of Santander and its province³ represented (and still represent) Catholic conservatism, so there was a rather obvious wish on the part of Radical officials to challenge reaction in its own stronghold. However, Santander was lacking neither a record of liberalism nor a struggle for economic and political progress – its inhabitants, the *Santanderinos*, had chosen to side with freedom in 1833 and 1868 and even then (in 1908) were ruled by a republican coalition in the city council. So, rather paradoxically, the clerical citadel could also be considered, by the same observers but from another point of view, a 'bulwark of liberty'.⁴

These were the two sides of the same coin, the two faces of a community that could be, at once, reactionary and progressive, conservative and liberal,

² *Libro de oro del Partido Republicano Radical* (Madrid, 1935), 47.

³ The name of the province was also Santander until 1980, when it took the name of Cantabria.

⁴ *Libro de oro*, 47.

Catholic and secular, clerical and anticlerical. During the nineteenth century and beyond, in Santander, as in the rest of Spain, battles were fought between liberal-secular and Catholic conceptions of politics, society and culture. On the one hand, there were those who thought that a modern polity should be organised according to the principles of liberalism. The civil and religious spheres should be neatly separated from each other or the latter even subordinated to the former, insofar as religion could pose a threat to freedom. In this way, a certain degree of secularisation of state and society was a desirable goal. Questions about the extent of secularisation and the most appropriate means of promoting it were deferred for later resolution. On the other hand, there were those who held that a polity should be ordered according to the philosophy of political Augustinianism, so that the Christian religion as taught by the Roman church remained in perpetuity the guiding principle of the civil authorities. The political authorities should thus be prepared to guarantee that everything in public (and even private) life conformed to Catholic doctrine and morality. Under this idea, liberalism was 'a sin' and liberal freedoms were to be rejected. Dissenting voices, and there were some very loud ones, were raised about the rightfulness of accepting the liberal system in order to work from within to the greater benefit of the church.

It could be said that two cities existed within the walls of the city of Santander – the city of God, and the city of men; and they were at war. This chapter tells the story of the (culture) war between them. It starts in 1875, just after the anticlerical Spanish liberal revolutions were definitely over. It narrates how Santander Catholics regained that pre-eminence in local public life that they had never completely lost. It describes how Santander's secularists resisted that religious revival and how they even counter-attacked the church's restored position from 1901 onwards. It shows how, in turn, Santander Catholics were able to retaliate and fight off the renewed advances of secularisation. It finishes in 1913, when the intensity of the conflict faded out, as new issues caught the attention of the public.

REBUILDING THE CITY OF GOD

Two bishops presided over the revival of Santander Catholicism during the Restoration period. They were very different indeed. Vicente Calvo y Valero (1876–84) was a liberal-minded, outgoing Andalusian, whereas Vicente S. Sánchez de Castro (1884–1920) was an anti-liberal, retiring Castilian. Both of them, however, believed that it was high time that the Catholic church began to work towards reclaiming Spanish society for God. Both of them

also agreed upon the means of achieving that goal – the improvement of the seminary, the disciplining of the diocesan clergy, the establishment of religious congregations in the diocese, the foundation of Catholic journals, the promotion of popular missions, the organisation of laymen's and laywomen's associations and the development of Catholic education. Both men, moreover, shared the view that politics were a crucial instrument in the construction of the city of God. Nevertheless, they could not agree on the kind of political option that would best suit the Spanish situation while simultaneously meeting the requirements of ecclesiastical doctrine. Nor, for that matter, could most Catholics.

The 1880s were a particularly busy decade for Spanish political Catholicism. The clergy and Catholic laymen were profoundly (and very often noisily) divided about the orientation of genuine Christian politics. Some Catholics believed that *rallié* Catholicism in France and the Zentrum Party in Germany showed the path to follow in Spain.⁵ Among them was Bishop Vicente Calvo, Sánchez de Castro's predecessor in Santander (1876–84) and one of the promoters of the Unión Católica, a movement founded in 1881 to reunite political Catholicism and help it to participate in the constitutional system. Other Catholics called themselves *puros* (the 'pure'), abhorring any compromise with the liberal regime, and labelling those willing to cooperate as *mestizos* ('half-castes'). In their Santander mouthpiece *La Verdad*, an equivalent of Madrid's *El Siglo Futuro*, one could learn that only they constituted 'the party of *all* Catholics', that the *Syllabus* was their political agenda, that other political forces were all 'liberal', and that *mestizos* constituted the greatest danger for the future of the church.⁶ Eventually, the *puros* themselves split in 1888 and a group led by Ramón Nocedal, editor of *El Siglo Futuro*, broke away to form their own Integrist Party, which, in turn, kept accusing everyone else of deviationism from ultramontane orthodoxy.

Every effort of the Spanish hierarchy, the nuncio or the pope himself to bring this feud to a halt proved ineffective. Even the Catholic Congresses (1889–1902), an attempt at unity inspired by the Italian Opera dei Congressi, would have very limited success. By the turn of the century, Spanish

⁵ The intricate Catholic politics of the Restoration are discussed in Domingo Benavides Gómez, *Democracia y cristianismo en la España de la Restauración* (Madrid, 1978); Marta M. Campomar Fornieles, *La cuestión religiosa en la Restauración* (Santander, 1984); Robles, *Insurrección*; Julio de la Cueva, *Clericales y anticlericales. El conflicto entre confesionalidad y secularización en Cantabria, 1875–1923* (Santander, 1994), 81–90; Solange Hibbs-Lissorgues, *Iglesia, prensa y sociedad en España (1868–1904)* (Alicante, 1995); William J. Callahan, *The Catholic Church in Spain, 1875–1998* (Washington D.C., 2000), 20–56.

⁶ *La Verdad*, 17 July 1882, 10 February 1883, 21 April 1883.

Catholics were so engrossed in internecine political wars that they seemed to have no time for building up the confessional society they claimed to pursue. In reality, Spanish Catholics could afford strong political dissension because, thus far, there was no real threat to the tranquillity of the church. Furthermore, the city of God was not being rebuilt in newspaper offices or in party committees, but elsewhere.

Take the Jesuits, for instance. They were very good at building – quite literally, if it comes to that. In 1890, they consecrated a brand new Church of the Sacred Heart in the centre of Santander. It was a notable neo-Gothic construction that would very soon become the ‘fashionable’ temple for Santander’s middle classes. The Jesuits even boasted that people had preferred to come to the consecration service for their church than to go to the reopening ceremony of the bishop’s cathedral – which had undergone extensive restoration work.⁷ Just the year before, near Santander, the Society of Jesus had also finished building a truly impressive seminary, an edifice in the modernist style, towering over the village of Comillas. After 1912, when an annex was added, it would accommodate up to 500 students.

The Jesuits were very good at the ‘spiritual’ building of the city as well. In this respect, they seemed to be ever present in the pastoral life of Santander.⁸ They promoted and directed pious associations – the Congregation of St Stanislas Kostka, for schoolboys; the Congregation of St Aloysius Gonzaga, for young men; the Daughters of Mary, for young women; the Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Apostolate of Prayer, the Congregation of the Holy Trinity, the Conferences of St Vincent de Paul, the Catechist Ladies, the Catholic Workers’ Circle, for adults. They celebrated mass and administered the sacraments. They preached. They taught the catechism. They took pastoral care into the hospital and the prison. They gave spiritual exercises. They provided spiritual guidance for many of Santander’s families. They served as chaplains for many religious communities. They did not have a school of their own in the city, but the boys of the Santander bourgeoisie were sent to their *colegios* in Bilbao, Gijón and Valladolid. Last but not least, the Jesuits made an essential contribution to the symbolic construction of the community – they sponsored the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and were responsible for its success in Santander. Thus, Sacred Heart Day, which was not an official holiday, ‘look[ed], for

⁷ Manuel Revuelta González, *La Compañía de Jesús en la España contemporánea*, vol. II: *Expansión en tiempos recios (1884–1906)* (Madrid, 1991), 496–7.

⁸ *Ibid.*, II, 1036–41; Lesmes Frías, *La Provincia de Castilla de la Compañía de Jesús desde 1863 hasta 1914* (Bilbao, 1915), 221–66.

the solemnity of the evening procession, for the attendance of people at church, for the ornamentation and illumination of the streets, not like a working day, but like a holiday, and like the most important holiday'.⁹ It should not be forgotten that this was not a neutral sort of popular devotion, but one heavily loaded with counter-secularising and counter-revolutionary connotations – an aspect that will be addressed further on.

Obviously, the Society of Jesus was not alone in the task of reconquering the city for God. There were also the secular priests, both those who belonged to the cathedral chapter and those in charge of the five parish churches of Santander. There were laymen and – most conspicuously – laywomen willing to be counted among the number of the Levites. And there were, above all, other religious congregations whose figures multiplied over the Restoration period. In fact, whereas the relative numbers of the secular clergy in the diocese of Santander were stable (a ratio of about one priest to 515 inhabitants¹⁰), the number of the regulars increased from 924 (207 men and 717 women) in 1900 to 1,415 (258 men and 837 women) in 1923 (one member of a religious order for every 299 inhabitants in 1900, and one for every 235 in 1923).¹¹ The majority of the congregations to which these people belonged had been established in the Santander diocese after 1851, and at least three-quarters of them after 1875. At a national level, the growth of the regular clergy was equally noticeable – from 20,502 (1,683 men and 18,819 women) in 1860 to 54,438 (12,142 men and 42,296 women) in 1900 and 71,815 (17,210 men and 54,605 women) in 1923.¹² An 1892 Vatican report rejoiced in this boom of religious communities in Spain and congratulated Spain on the fact that 'the present flourishing has been achieved in only 12 or 15 years'.¹³

Friars and nuns were at the vanguard of the Catholic offensive. Bishops recruited them for their dioceses by the hundreds. Sometimes, it looked as if the prelates relied more on them than on their own diocesan priests. Regulars were certainly trustworthy. They submitted to a collective discipline the secular clergy plainly lacked, and, in many respects, were better trained to meet the modern necessities of Catholicism. It was a well-known nineteenth-century phenomenon that most people who decided to take

⁹ Frías, *La Provincia*, 249.

¹⁰ Santiago Díez Llama, *La situación socio-religiosa de Santander y el obispo Sánchez de Castro (1884–1920)* (Santander, 1971), 34, and *Anuario Estadístico de España* (Madrid, 1916), 16.

¹¹ *Estadística de las comunidades religiosas existentes en España en 1 de abril de 1923* (Madrid, 1923), xv–xxvii.

¹² Callahan, *The Catholic Church*, 190.

¹³ Report on the state of religious orders in Spain, 1892, in Vicente Cárcel Ortí, *León XIII y los católicos españoles. Informes vaticanos sobre la Iglesia en España* (Pamplona, 1988), 664.

religious vows chose an order devoted to active life. Thus, for instance, all six of the male and nine out of the eleven female congregations existing in the city of Santander by 1900 were dedicated to pastoral and charitable activities.¹⁴ They focused their work on three areas. Firstly, the male clergy in particular worked on instilling a very strict Catholic conscience in individuals and groups through preaching, spiritual guidance and the organisation of religious missions usually aimed at an entire community (a village, a neighbourhood, even a city, such as Santander, in April 1900).¹⁵ Secondly, nuns in particular made an effort to turn social assistance back into a specifically ecclesiastical domain, making themselves present either in official centres (such as the Sisters of Charity) or in their own institutes. Last but by no means least, both men and women paid special attention to teaching as probably the most effective means of ensuring the future of Spain as a confessional society. The *colegios* run by religious congregations and the church's alleged right to ensure that public school teaching was in accordance with Catholic doctrine and morals ensured that its grip on primary education was nearly absolute and quite remarkable at the secondary level as well.

THE QUIET RESISTANCE OF THE GODLESS

Since 1875, the Levites had been working and indeed successfully working to bring the city back to God. Catholic associations, confessional schools, public displays of religiosity, new religious buildings – everything contributed to giving the impression of a church triumphant under the restored monarchy's benevolent protection. One could have wondered what had happened to liberals and secularists – those that the winners, such as Bishop Sánchez de Castro, were wont to describe as 'godless armies' and 'legions that serve under the Prince of Darkness'.¹⁶

The 'godless' had never been very strong in Santander. To be sure, Santander had proved to be a liberal city during the nineteenth century, but its inhabitants had always espoused a very gentle variety of liberalism, especially as far as religion was concerned. Hence, the anticlericalism of the liberal revolutions was largely an imported phenomenon, for the most part

¹⁴ Alberto Gayé, *Santander y su provincia. Guía de la Montaña y su capital* (Santander, 1903), 205–6, 218–20.

¹⁵ For the description of a mission, in a village near Santander, see William A. Christian Jr., *Moving Crucifixes in Modern Spain* (Princeton, N.J., 1992), 29–37.

¹⁶ Vicente S. Sánchez de Castro, pastoral letter of 25 May 1891, *BOEOS*, 28 May 1891. This kind of language was common from Sánchez de Castro and other bishops.

alien to Santander society. Only during the six-year period following the 1868 revolution might it be said that anticlerical attitudes took root among significant sections of Santander's population. After 1875, the most moderate representatives of Spanish secularism joined the Liberal Party (one of the two alternating in power during the Restoration) and eventually abided by the religious 'tolerance' (not 'freedom') sanctioned by the 1876 constitution. The rest would take refuge in masonic lodges and in republican clubs.

Religious dissension in Spain obviously lacked a dimension that was present in many other European countries: there were hardly any Protestants in Spain. Although 1868 democratic freedoms had permitted what peninsular evangelical churches call the 'Spanish Second Reformation', the results of Protestant evangelisation in Spain were poor. In Santander, the product of this new chance for reformed Christianity was a small evangelical community founded in 1872 by Alice and William Gulick, members of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. When the Gulicks moved to San Sebastian in 1880, the church was entrusted to a local minister. Pastor Enrique Tienda tended a flock that probably never exceeded fifty communicants and whose activities were hardly noticed by the rest of the city.¹⁷ Only as late as 1910 – and almost as a part of that year's anticlerical campaign – were they able to call a public assembly in Santander. It was a meeting for the freedom of worship, which gained the support of several republican parties and the socialist youth organisation.

Tienda not only led the evangelical community of Santander, but was also one of the over two hundred freemasons that were active in the city from 1870 to 1895.¹⁸ During these years, eleven lodges provided meeting points for the progressive, secular sectors of Santander's middle classes, where they could discuss their ideals and shelter from 'the clergy and the Jesuits who are taking hold of everything and acquiring a fearful predominance'. Liberals and republicans, believers and non-believers, professionals and industrialists, military men and merchants, Santanderinos and foreigners – all those who gathered together in the name of liberty under the umbrella of freemasonry saw themselves as a resistant refuge in the midst of 'a fanaticised

¹⁷ Carmen de Zulueta, *Misioneras, educadoras, feministas. Historia del Instituto Internacional* (Madrid, 1984), 75–95; De la Cueva, *Clericales*, 181–5.

¹⁸ The freemasons claimed to have at least 635 members in the province of Santander in 1888, but I have only been able to document 226, of whom 208 were in the provincial capital: Julio de la Cueva, 'Clericalismo y anticlericalismo en la Cantabria de la Restauración (1875–1923)', (Ph.D. dissertation, Universidad de Cantabria, 1993), 357–77, 711–21.

majority'.¹⁹ After 1895, freemasonry disappeared from Santander (until its refounding in 1931), partly due to local organisational problems, and partly due to the national crisis of the order, which was accused of instigating the secessionist movements of Cuba and the Philippines. Nevertheless, it had contributed to the survival of a secularist opinion in Santander during what were (for anticlericals) the hard times of the Catholic revival.

Most Santander masons belonged to or sympathised with Republican parties. After the Liberals' compromise and acceptance of religious *tolerance* within a *confessional* state as one of the bases of the Restoration regime, the Republicans were left alone in defending the principle of religious *freedom* within a *secularised* state. The trouble was that the Republicans, after the failure of the First Spanish Republic, were simply too weak, discredited and divided to make their voices heard. Furthermore, their disagreements went beyond their preferences on leadership, the ideal organisation of the state or the attitude towards the Restoration regime. The Republicans did not even concur on the extent of the secularism they were advocating, and the still open questions multiplied. Should church and state be separated? Should secularisation involve just the state or society as well? Should the state and its institutions (for instance, public schools) be militantly 'laic' or just 'neutral'? Could a Republican be a Catholic (and vice versa)?²⁰ In any case, anticlericalism (a sort of catch-all word and concept) remained a strong feature of anti-monarchist discourse, which allowed the divided Spanish Republicans to delude themselves into thinking they retained a common – if loose – identity and even a common language. It is little wonder that one of the people who worked most intensely to reunite Spanish republicanism, José Nakens, was also the editor of the outrageously anticlerical Madrid newspaper *El Motín*.

The anticlerical genre was also cultivated by Santander's republican newspapers. In December 1881, all three of them – *La Montaña*, *El Diario de Santander* and *La Voz Montañesa* – were excommunicated by Bishop Calvo. Calvo had turned into one of the main targets of the three papers' criticism and mockery, because of his authoritarianism, his love of episcopal pageantry and his determination to set up religious communities in every corner of the diocese. However, the bishop was not alone – he

¹⁹ Letter from Alejandro Arrojo to Lodge 'La Antorcha' of Madrid, 18 September 1895, in De la Cueva, 'Clericalismo', 371; Logia Alianza Quinta, número 57, de Santander, *Indicaciones sobre reformas del Cuadro para su mejora y bien de la Orden en general* (Santander, 1889), 6.

²⁰ From August to October 1881, two Santander republican newspapers *El Diario de Santander* and *La Montaña* devoted more and more pages to the discussion of this last point. It would not be the only time the Republicans would deal with this issue.

shared the pages of these papers with lustful priests, greedy friars, idle nuns and ultramontane Catholics. Humorous writing, frequently in verse, supplied the chief weapon for attacking the otherwise apparently all-powerful Restoration church. One of its Santander masters was journalist José Estrañi, who had a daily column in *La Voz Montañesa*, 'Pacotillas', which he used to pour scorn on the clergy. His *pacotillas* were considered so insidious that, in December 1887, he was sentenced to three years' imprisonment. He escaped and, pretending to be writing from hell, sent some hilarious 'Infernal Letters' to his editor. The underworld he described was of course teeming with priests, friars, nuns and sanctimonious people.²¹ The 1880s represented a golden age for the satirical press in Santander. Many newspapers of this sort were founded, and most of them owed their vast popular appeal to their bold approach to clerical affairs.

By the end of the 1880s, anticlerical satire in the Santander press diminished in importance and it would not resurface until the turn of the century. Meanwhile, Santander secularists experienced a new and perhaps, in the long run, more effective means for countering the church's formidable advances. This means was the foundation of *escuelas laicas* ('secular schools'): primary schools freed from clerical domination, where religion was not taught at all and, instead, the greatest importance was given to the learning of positive sciences, hygiene, morality and good manners.²² The secular schools were an attempt to retaliate against the church in an area it considered its own and where it was so rapidly growing – education. They were also an attempt to mirror French *écoles laïques* – an attempt that in Spain had to be based on private initiative because the state would never support them. Santander's first secular school was the brainchild of the Asociación de Enseñanza Laica, which in turn had been founded by the local freemasons.²³ Actually, the association can be thought of as a joint venture between republicanism and freemasonry, the two things being exactly the same in Santander at the time. The first president of the school board was Modesto Piñeiro, a wealthy merchant, Republican and mason, and its first headmaster was Marcos Linazasoro, also a Republican and a mason. The schools may be seen as a genuine secularist success. They provoked the immediate, angry reply of local Catholicism – the bishop himself would promote the creation of a new free Catholic primary school, the Escuela de San José, with the expressed goal of counteracting the influence of the

²¹ José Estrañi, *Cartas infernales en verso y en prosa* (Madrid, 1889), 179–180. Estrañi was eventually indulted in January 1889.

²² *Estatutos generales de la Asociación de Enseñanza Laica de Santander* (Santander, 1889).

²³ Logia Alianza Quinta, *Indicaciones*, 10.

secular school.²⁴ Furthermore, the number of secular schools in Santander increased to two in 1900, when Linazasoro opened his own centre, and to three in 1903, when a group of radical Republicans, socialists and anarchists decided that the old secular schools were too moderate and 'neutral', and broke away to found a militantly secular Centro de Enseñanza Integral y Laica.²⁵

SETTING FIRE TO THE CITY OF THE LEVITES

On 31 July 1901, the drama *Electra*, by famous playwright and novelist Benito Pérez Galdós, was performed at Santander's Teatro Principal. In the play, two men fight over a woman – thus far a conventional theme. What was unusual about this fight, however, was that the young scientist Máximo wanted Electra in order to make her his wife, whereas pious old Pantoja wanted the girl not for himself but to put her in a convent. There was something else unusual about the play, and it could not be found on stage, but amongst the audience, which continually interrupted the performance with shouts of 'Down with the Jesuits!', 'Down with reaction!', 'Long live freedom!', 'Long live the Republic!', and liberal songs such as the *Himno de Riego* and *La Marseillaise*. The flashpoint came when, after Electra had been put into a convent, Máximo, despairing of ever retrieving his beloved, utters the passionate cry: 'We have to set fire to this convent! We have to set fire to Madrid!'²⁶

The way *Electra* was performed in Santander was by no means unique. In fact, it followed the pattern established the first time it was performed in Madrid on 30 January 1901 and repeated all over Spain from that day on.²⁷ Just one element was missing in Santander – there was no demonstration in the street after the performance. In Madrid, people had marched the author to his home, acclaiming him and insulting the clergy. It was the first in a cycle of noisy demonstrations against clericalism, first in the capital, then in Barcelona and Valencia, and eventually in almost every Spanish town.²⁸ The demonstrators showed their rage against the church by marching,

²⁴ *BOEOS*, 14 March 1885 and 21 July 1885.

²⁵ *Estatutos y reglamento del Centro de Enseñanza Integral y Laica de Santander* (Santander, 1903), 20; *La Región Cantabria*, 24 December 1908.

²⁶ Benito Pérez Galdós, *Electra* [1901], in *Obras completas* (Madrid, 1968), VI, 899; *El Cantábrico*, 1 August 1901.

²⁷ E. Inman Fox, *Ideología y política en las letras de fin de siglo (1898)* (Madrid, 1988), 65–93.

²⁸ For anticlerical collective action in Spain in the 1900s, Julio de la Cueva, 'Movilización, política e identidad anticlerical, 1898–1910', *Ayer*, 27 (1997), 101–25, and Eduardo González Calleja, *La razón de la fuerza. Orden público, subversión y violencia política en la España de la Restauración (1875–1917)* (Madrid, 1998), 324–46.

shouting, and stoning and attacking religious buildings. In the long run, the mobilisation of the secularists would not recede until 1910. In the short run, it lasted until a new Liberal government replaced the Conservative one in March 1901. For the first time in twenty-five years, the Liberals, led by a reluctant Prime Minister Práxedes Sagasta, felt forced to promise the inclusion of anticlerical policies in their government agenda. In any case, protesters would very soon return to the streets to put pressure on the government and to respond to alleged clerical provocations (for the most part, processions celebrating the jubilee of Christ the Redeemer called by Pope Leo XIII).

Electra was the catalyst that made it possible for anticlerical opinion to be translated into collective action. This opinion had been formed after the humiliating defeat in the Philippines and in Cuba in 1898, a defeat that implied the loss of the remains of the Spanish Empire and the general awareness that Spain might well be counted among the 'dying countries' that Lord Salisbury had just talked about in his famous speech delivered at the London Albert Hall on 4 May 1898. Thus, in a few days, the Spanish press (from republican to Catholic) went from exorbitant jingoism to deepest pessimism – the Spanish, a decadent people, had been beaten by the Americans, a young, modern nation. Intellectuals had been wondering for years about the causes of Spanish decadence, and some of them had thought the reasons lay in the negative influence of Catholicism. Now, these opinions were disseminated by republican and democratic newspapers, and it was not too difficult for them to jump to conclusions – if the church was to blame for Spanish prostration and decay, then it was to blame for Spanish defeat too. It suddenly became common to denounce the clerical invasion, especially visible in the growing numbers of the religious orders. Moreover, it was feared that reactionaries would take advantage of national weakness to step forward and take power. Rumours about Carlist activity in the north and the formation of a Conservative government with reputedly clerical elements in March 1899 contributed to giving credibility to these allegations. During the summer, there would be a number of anticlerical riots in Cádiz, Zaragoza, Valencia and other towns.²⁹

²⁹ For the origins of 1900 anticlericalism, Manuel Revuelta González, 'La recuperación eclesiástica y el rechazo anticlerical en el cambio de siglo', in J. L. García Delgado (ed.), *España entre dos siglos (1875–1931). Continuidad y cambio* (Madrid, 1991), 219–31; Manuel Pérez Ledesma, 'La sociedad española, la guerra y la derrota', in Juan Pan-Montojo (ed.), *Más se perdió en Cuba. España, 1898 y la crisis de fin de siglo* (Madrid, 1998), 91–149; Julio de la Cueva, 'Si los curas y frailes supieran...: La violencia anticlerical', in Santos Juliá (ed.), *Violencia política en la España del siglo XX* (Madrid, 2000), 191–233.

In autumn 1900, two new events would contribute to stirring up anti-clerical sentiments. The first was the announcement of the crown princess's marriage to a member of a well-known Carlist family. The second one was the Ubao affair – the judicial cause célèbre of a young woman who had joined a religious order without parental permission (a case, by the way, to which *Electra* bore a clear and, despite the author's protestations, probably non-accidental resemblance). Furthermore, anticlericalism had been regaining political importance in France – the mirror in which Spanish democrats liked to look at themselves – since the Dreyfus affair. From 1899, both Waldeck-Rousseau's and Combes's cabinet proved it was feasible to apply tough policies to the church, and gave Spanish secularists hope that similar measures, if adequate pressure was exercised, could also be adopted in Spain. On 14 December 1900, the leader of the left wing of the Liberal Party, José Canalejas, emulated Gambetta's old claim and urged the Congress to wage 'war on clericalism'.

Although *Electra* was performed in Santander only in July 1901, its echoes reached the city immediately after its performance in Madrid. On 2 February, a demonstration was called by *El Cantábrico* (now the leading democratic newspaper in Santander, created in 1895, edited by Estrañi, and unsurprisingly forbidden by Bishop Sánchez de Castro in 1905) to pay tribute to 'our neighbour' Pérez Galdós (the writer used to holiday in Santander). It was the first in a long series of anticlerical protests which would span the entire decade. Most of the protests took the form of conventional collective action, but others assumed a markedly violent character. Thus, on 12 February 1901 a second anticlerical march degenerated into a real riot – the protesters began by shouting 'Down with reaction', 'Down with clericalism', 'Down with the Jesuits' and ended up stoning the Catholic Circle of Workers, the offices of the Catholic newspaper *La Atalaya*, the Salesian school and the bishop's residence, and attacking the Carmelites' convent. They were unable to attain their apparently most cherished goal – to storm the Jesuits' residence – as it was heavily guarded by the police. Instead, they had to resign themselves to throwing stones at people attending mass at the Sacred Heart Church. Two years later, on 8 November 1903, the consequences of a very similar riot would be a lot sadder – one boy dead, hit by a stray bullet, and two further casualties as a result of police charges.³⁰ In any case, nothing that happened in Santander could be compared with the 'tragic week' in Barcelona in 1909, when a protest against the

³⁰ *El Cantábrico*, 2, 3 and 13 February 1901, 9 and 10 November 1903; *La Atalaya*, 13 February 1901; *El Diario Montañés*, 9 and 10 December 1903.

war in Morocco turned into anticlerical rioting and the burning of about eighty churches, convents and Catholic schools – an event that profoundly shocked the country.

Nevertheless, as has been mentioned, most protests were peaceful. Thus, on 29 July 1903, protesters walked quietly to the French consulate to pay tribute to Combes's anticlerical policies. On 23 December 1906, demonstrators marched in silence to show their solidarity with Minister Bartolomé Dávila, who had introduced a bill to demand that official permission be required for setting up religious communities. On 3 July 1910, demonstrators marched again, now in support of the *ley del Candado*, a law introduced by Prime Minister José Canalejas, banning the establishment of new religious communities for two years, a period during which a stricter law on associations was expected to be passed. On 15 December 1912, ten thousand Santanderinos demonstrated against the Society of Jesus. This time, the march was not part of a nation-wide campaign, as had happened on other occasions, but a response to local circumstances – the unlawful tactics allegedly employed by a Jesuit to deceive a rich widow into making her will in favour of the Society.³¹

These rallies were not isolated actions. Dozens of anticlerical meetings were convened in Santander throughout the decade. Some of them were political assemblies. Some commemorated any historical event that could be regarded as a triumph of freedom over reaction. Others were curious, such as banquets which took place on Good Friday to challenge publicly the ecclesiastical commandment to fast on that day. From 1910 onwards, some Santander secularists went as far as to hold outdoor parties with abundant food, music and dancing on a day considered so sacred that even traffic was forbidden. In 1913, a provocative 'anticlerical week' was scheduled to coincide with that year's Holy Week.³² These celebrations represented only part of an attempt by the most extreme secularists to counter the church's social omnipresence on the symbolic plane as well. Other powerful elements of this symbolic effort could be found in the struggle over the rites of passage. Some secularists decided to defy the church on its monopoly of the ritualisation of birth, marriage and death. Neither civil marriage nor civil celebration of birth were common in Santander, but civil burials occurred quite frequently among Republicans, socialists and anarchists. Considering the clergy's painstaking efforts to make converts out of dying non-believers and the recurrent disputes over the bodies of deceased secularists, there is

³¹ *El Cantábrico*, 24 December 1906, 1 August 1910, 16 December 1912.

³² *El Diario Montañés*, 26 March 1910; *La Región Cántabra*, 15 April 1911; *El Reformista*, 15, 22 and 29 March 1913.

no doubt that, by 1900, a death without sacraments and a civil burial had come to constitute a militant action, a victory for anticlericals and a defeat for the church.³³

It is certain that the mobilisation of the secularists would not have been so successful without their appealing popular arguments and their extensive network of meeting places for socialising and communication. The discourse most secularists used to make theirs a truly popular cause was an 'anticlerical' one rather than one on the advantages of secularisation. Thus, they would speak on the immorality of the clergy and how, through their selfish behaviour, they were bringing countless evils to the country – poverty, ignorance, war and so forth. Although the secular clergy could sometimes be exonerated from this responsibility, those in the religious orders – and above all the Jesuits – should always be regarded as the most dangerous kind of plague one could ever encounter.³⁴ This argument was carried forth by the leftist press (there were a dozen left-wing newspapers in Santander from 1900 to 1913), and repeated over and over in political clubs, committees, unions and even taverns – some of them belonging to well-known local Republicans. The Republican parties and the anarchist movement provided the material and organisational resources necessary for mobilisation. The Socialist Party would not join the general secularist movement until 1909, when they formed a coalition with Republicans in the *Conjunción Republicano-Socialista* – before, they had denounced anticlericalism as a bourgeois device invented to divert workers from their real, anti-capitalist objectives.³⁵ It should be stressed that, despite the apparent cooperation among different political forces from left-wing Liberals to anarchists during this decade, differences persisted about how much secularisation was desirable – these divergences had merely been temporarily blurred in the heat of the confrontation against the common clerical enemy.

IN JUST DEFENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

The clerical camp could not remain inactive while the positions they had secured during the previous twenty-five years were under such heavy fire. They could not afford to lose what they had paid such a price to win.

³³ De la Cueva, 'Clericales', 158–60.

³⁴ José Álvarez Junco, *El emperador del paralelo. Lerroux y la demagogia populista* (Madrid, 1990), 401–14; Julio de la Cueva, 'The Stick and the Candle: Clericals and Anticlericals in Northern Spain, 1898–1913', *European History Quarterly* 26/2 (1996), 241–65.

³⁵ Víctor Manuel Arbeloa, *Socialismo y anticlericalismo* (Madrid, 1973), 158–9.

And they could no longer rely on governmental protection, since one of the parties taking turns in power was advocating (though somewhat forced by pressure from their left) anticlerical policies. Thus, Bishop Sánchez de Castro felt compelled to point out in a pastoral letter that Catholics should prepare themselves for 'just defence', armed with both 'spiritual' and 'political weapons' against 'anticlericalism [, which] means war against the clergy, religion, the Church and Jesus Christ'.³⁶ As Frances Lannon has argued, the kind of defence Catholics were ready to put up belonged in the realm of community defence. To be sure, Catholic mobilisation was often prompted by circumstances originating far beyond the boundaries of a particular city, diocese or region, and the efforts of Catholic protesters may well have been directed towards changing political conditions in the country as a whole. However, many of the means they employed to counteract the advances of the secularist movement were deeply rooted in their local way of life and in their traditions. Moreover, Catholics rarely intended their actions to be 'political' in a conventional sense. They understood them rather as a popular movement of religious, even patriotic, resistance against forces alien to the community.³⁷

It was therefore natural that, in their first attempts at resisting the growing threat represented by anticlericalism, Catholics produced from their cultural 'tool kit'³⁸ those instruments most meaningful to them in terms of their codes of religious expression and those devices which best fitted with their most cherished traditions – processions, pilgrimages, devotions. On the other hand, the use of well-established liturgical formulae did not mean that they would not acquire very modern connotations in the struggle against secularisation. As *La Lectura Dominical*, a Madrid confessional paper, remarked in 1900: 'In these days, when impiety boasts so proudly of its strength, it is more than ever necessary to confound it and to check it by means of pilgrimages and processions'.³⁹ Very soon indeed, the Catholics had their chance to make a public display of their determination to confront anticlericalism using these kinds of methods. In summer 1901, the cults and processions celebrating that year's jubilee certainly added a new meaning to their purely religious one – they were a response to previous anticlerical

³⁶ Vicente S. Sánchez de Castro, pastoral letter of 12 October 1906, *BOEOS*, 14 October 1906.

³⁷ See Frances Lannon, '1898 and the Politics of Catholic Identity in Spain', in Austen Ivereigh (ed.), *The Politics of Religion in an Age of Revival: Studies in Nineteenth-Century Europe and Latin America* (London, 2000), 56–73.

³⁸ Culture as a 'tool kit' in Ann Swidler, 'Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies', *American Sociological Review* 51 (1986), 273–86.

³⁹ *La Lectura Dominical*, 24 June 1900.

mobilisation.⁴⁰ Even when other, more secular means were developed in response to specific anticlerical threats, the world of shrines, festivals and devotions continued to supply powerful rallying symbols and reassuring myths to the Catholic imagination.

Although the number of potential – and actual – devotional objects was immense, Catholic mobilisation was organised for the most part around two or three. The key devotions in the struggle against secularisation, in Spain as in the rest of Europe, were without doubt the Marian devotion, the Sacred Heart of Jesus and, growing in importance, the Eucharistic cult.⁴¹ In Santander, the cult of Mary was, in effect, given unprecedented significance as she, in her guise of Our Lady Bien Aparecida, was surprisingly appointed patroness of the diocese in 1906 and pilgrimages to her shrine were arranged, somewhat lessening the importance of the old patron saints, Roman martyrs Emetherius and Celedonius. It is difficult not to relate the unexpected patronage of a none-too-well-known rural madonna to ecclesiastical efforts to find powerful icons to keep the Christian community united at a time of political and religious crisis.⁴²

In Santander, there was in any case a devotion better suited to the urban dwellers of a perhaps ‘Levitical’, but certainly modern, bustling town. It was the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the universal cult disseminated by the Jesuits. It was a cult, moreover, which very much appealed to militant Spanish Catholicism, since it was often said that Jesus himself, while showing his Sacred Heart to Jesuit Father Bernardo de Hoyos, had promised him in 1733: ‘I will reign in Spain.’ The nineteenth century had ended and the twentieth century had begun with a national campaign for the installation of plaques dedicated to the Sacred Heart on the outer walls of private houses, which was meant to show ‘the public consecration of their dwellers to the Heart of Jesus and the proclamation of His social reign’, but that was also understood to mean a sign ‘that distinguishes an absolutist’s residence from a liberal’s one’.⁴³ In fact, by 1900, the Sacred Heart of Jesus had come to incorporate, for clericals and anticlericals alike, the symbol of (much-desired or much-feared) Catholic restoration. It is little wonder that during one of the magnificent Santander processions, on the Day of the Sacred Heart we have mentioned above, defiant banners hung from

⁴⁰ And as a provocation they were understood by secularists: *El Norte*, 8 June 1901.

⁴¹ Mary Vincent, *Catholicism and the Second Spanish Republic. Religion and Politics in Salamanca, 1930–1936* (Oxford, 1996), 82–108.

⁴² I have discussed this issue in Julio de la Cueva, ‘Inventing Catholic Identities in Twentieth-Century Spain: The Virgin Bien-Aparecida, 1904–1910’, *Catholic Historical Review* 87/4 (2001), 624–42.

⁴³ *El Mensajero del Corazón de Jesús y del Apostolado de la Oración*, April 1899; *El Norte*, 8 July 1899.

some balconies bearing the symbol of the Republic and the legend: 'This will reign'.⁴⁴

The bishop of Santander had encouraged his flock in October 1906 not to content themselves with 'spiritual' weapons, but to fight anticlericalism with the aid of 'political' arms as well. By January 1907, the very Madrid Catholic paper that had called for the celebration of processions and pilgrimages, had come to the conclusion that 'there is no alternative to following the path our enemies have plotted', since 'we are as good as they at meetings, demonstrations and propaganda'.⁴⁵ Traditional means alone did not seem to suffice. While the Catholics had been mounting their processions, the anticlerical campaign had induced the Liberal government, after five years of hesitation, to introduce a bill regulating religious communities (the Dávila Bill). To make matters worse, the Law of Separation of Church and State had been passed in France. It was high time to fight the enemy with his own weapons.

On 6 January 1907, a Catholic assembly (the word *mitin*, from the English 'meeting', which in Spanish has strong political connotations, was deliberately chosen to announce it) was held in the Teatro Principal of Santander to protest against the Dávila Bill. The meeting was convened by a Diocesan Board of Catholic Action created ad hoc in November 1906.⁴⁶ Throughout Spain, 'Catholic defence' groups rallied in theatres, bullrings and other premises, responding to the call from the Central Board of Catholic Action. It was the first time that Santander Catholics had resorted to a modern formula of mass mobilisation which expressed their positions and made a show of strength. The recipe was so successful – the bill never became law – that it was subsequently repeated. The occasion for this came about in 1910, when the Liberal Prime Minister Canalejas seemed bent on implementing anticlerical policies. His first gesture was to open the secular schools closed by his predecessor, Conservative Prime Minister Antonio Maura (who had blamed them for the 'tragic week' of Barcelona)⁴⁷. The reopening sparked off Catholic meetings all over Spain, the one in Santander taking place on 27 February. The second anticlerical measure taken by the Canalejas government was the above-mentioned *ley del Candado*. The response was again staged on a national scale. On

⁴⁴ *La Atalaya*, 27 June 1908. ⁴⁵ *La Lectura Dominical*, 19 January 1907.

⁴⁶ *La Atalaya*, 7 January 1907; *El Diario Montañés*, 7 January 1907; *Páginas Dominicales*, 13 January 1907.

⁴⁷ For the 'tragic week' of Barcelona, see Joan C. Ullman, *The Tragic Week. A Study of Anticlericalism in Spain* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), and Joaquín Romero Maura, *La Rosa de Fuego. El dorerismo barcelonés de 1899 a 1909* (Madrid, 1989), 501–42.

2 October 1910, Santander Catholics and many others throughout Spain took to the streets, not to carry sacred images in procession, but to express their anger by marching in civil demonstrations. Not for the first time, however, cultural clashes led to violence, when groups of radical anticlericals tried to boycott the demonstration by verbally abusing and physically attacking the demonstrators.⁴⁸

As had happened for the secularists, confessional mobilisation united Catholics regardless of their political differences – Conservatives, Carlists, Integrists, independents, all took part in protests against anticlerical policies. Political divisions were also overcome in April 1907, when a Catholic electoral coalition was founded in Santander – the Centro Católico Electoral, renamed Centro Católico Montañés in 1910. The political unification of all Catholics was still impossible at a national level, but this decade saw the formation of local confessional leagues and centres, some of them quite successful, such as those in Seville, Valencia and Mallorca. However, the union brought about by the Centro in Santander was not complete – Conservatives were left out on the basis that they were liberal and that ‘all Catholics must be anti-liberal’.⁴⁹ Presenting themselves simply as ‘Catholics’, they obtained seats on the city council, the provincial council and even one seat in parliament, in 1916. At the same time, Santander Catholics were able to establish a major, non-partisan daily newspaper in 1901. *El Diario Montañés* thus became the main representative of the ‘good press’ in Santander, ready to take up the fight against the more widely read liberal ‘bad press’, while at the same time offering a modern, quality paper. Again, local initiatives came before national realities – although several National Assemblies of the Good Press took place between 1904 and 1908, it would be 1910 before a big, national Catholic newspaper would be founded.

Nineteen-thirteen was the last year during which ‘Levites’ and ‘godless’, clericals and anticlericals, Catholics and secularists would confront each other. The Liberal government of the count of Romanones had decided that the catechism would not be taught in public schools to children whose parents had stated that they were not Catholics. The church strongly protested that in a Catholic country all children should be educated as Catholics. Secularists supported the decision, but they were not very pleased that it was such a minimal measure. From 1913 onwards, the intensity of the conflict decreased as new issues caught the attention of the public – the

⁴⁸ *El Diario Montañés*, 28 February 1910, 3 October 1910; *La Atalaya*, 3 October 1910; *El Cantábrico*, 3 October 1910.

⁴⁹ *El Diario Montañés*, 14 March 1907; De la Cueva, ‘Clericales’, 90–100.

European war, the war in Morocco, the crisis of the Restoration political system, and violent social conflicts. The battle had been hard and, apparently, Catholics had won. The state had not been secularised. The church militant was again the church triumphant on earth. In 1919, King Alfonso XIII consecrated the nation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. From 1923, many Catholics made their political career within the ranks of dictator Miguel Primo de Rivera's administration. Retribution was to come in 1931, when the Republic established a fully secular state, withdrew all economic support to the church, dissolved the Jesuits and forbade religious congregations to teach. A more brutal reckoning would follow in 1936, when the revolution in the republican rearguard at the beginning of the Civil War took the lives of almost 7,000 Catholic clerics. On the other hand, when the time to wage war came, Spanish Catholics were equally ready to take arms against those whom they regarded as the enemies of religion, and the church did not hesitate to sanction the military rebellion as a religious crusade. In a sense, the Civil War was the culmination of the nineteenth-century culture wars, except that the protagonists exchanged the predominantly cultural representations for real weapons and fighting.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ See José Sánchez, *The Spanish Civil War as a Religious Tragedy* (Notre Dame, 1987); Gabriele Ranzato, 'Dies irae. La persecuzione religiosa nella zona repubblicana durante la guerra civile spagnola (1936-1939)', *Movimento Operaio e Socialista*, 11 (1988), 195-220, and Julio de la Cueva, 'Religious Persecution, Anticlerical Tradition and Revolution: On Atrocities against the Clergy during the Spanish Civil War', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 33 (1998) 3, 355-69.

CHAPTER 8

Roma o morte: *culture wars in Italy**

Martin Papenheim

Like most of the rest of Europe, nineteenth-century Italy passed through a phase of heightened political and cultural conflict over the place of religious allegiances in a modern polity. Yet the Italian experience of culture war was also in some respects quite distinctive. In Italian parlance, the word '*Kulturkampf*'¹ was used untranslated as a foreign expression that referred specifically to German conditions.² The Italian culture war was less consistently organised at state-bureaucratic level than in Germany and the issues over which it was fought were in some respects quite different. By contrast with France, there was no strong republican-*laïciste* tradition. In order to convey a sense of what was distinctive about the Italian culture war, we should begin with an overview of the most important flashpoints of the conflict.

FLASHPOINTS

The presence of the papacy and of the 'Roman question' made the church–state relationship in Italy unique. But it is important to note that the history of 'the pope and Italy' had not always been one of unremitting antagonism. The unification of the country and the promotion of a national identity were not always seen as inimical to the interests of the papacy. Between 1815 and 1848, there were strong neo-Guelph tendencies within the Italian national movement. In 1843, writing from his exile in Brussels, Vincenzo Gioberti argued that Italy owed its unique historical position in the world to the outstanding imperial achievement of ancient Rome, and its claim to contemporary pre-eminence to the presence of the

* Translation from the German by Christopher Clark.

¹ On the history of the term, see Jörg Fisch, 'Zivilisation, Kultur', in Otto Brunner, Werner Conze and Reinhart Koselleck (eds.), *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* (Stuttgart, 1992), VII, 679–774, here 746, n. 396.

² I wish to thank Lutz Klinkhammer for drawing my attention to this point.

Holy See. He even argued that Italy should be organised as a confederation of states under the presidency of the pope.³ This dream came to an abrupt end in 1848, when Pius IX refused to wage war against Austria and rejected the prospect of a papal presidency over a federation of Italian states. Of course, there is no reason to believe that this dream of the unification of Italy under papal leadership could ever have been realised in practice. It was irreconcilable with the universalist dimension of the papal office. Moreover, the realities of power politics spoke against it. The kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia would hardly have been prepared to join such an organisation. As a consequence, the absorption of the *Patrimonium Petri* now became the central and defining question of national unification. A unified Italian state that excluded the central Italian territories of the pope would not have been acceptable in the longer term. The protracted process of Italian nation-building thus entailed a chain of events whose effect on nineteenth-century Catholics was traumatic: the flight of the pope in November 1848, the annexation of Rome in 1870, the 'imprisonment' of Pius IX and his successors in the Vatican until the Lateran Treaties of 1929. The (partly self-imposed) sufferings of the pope played a crucial role in binding the mass of Catholics more strongly to the head of their church. The overpowering dominance within European Catholicism of the ultramontane system of governance and of anti-liberal trends more generally could not have been achieved without the constant mobilisation, through petition campaigns and fund-raising activity – of Catholic solidarity with the pope.⁴ The hope that Catholic opinion might be mobilised in support of the re-acquisition of the papal state always played a role in papal policy – this calculation even underlay the turn towards social issues that marked the pontificate of Leo XIII.

Yet a substantial sector of the Catholic population, and even of the clergy, had played a vital role in the *Risorgimento*. This was especially the case in Lombardy, where Jansenist traditions were especially strong. A number of clergymen in this region even took part in nationalist conspiracies, such as the three Mantuan priests Giovanni Grioli, Bartolomeo Grazioli and Enrico Tazzoli, who were arrested and executed as ring-leaders by the Austrians between 1851 and 1853 and became famous as 'martiri di Belfiore'.⁵ It was

³ Vincenzo Gioberti, *Del primato morale e civile degli italiani* (Brussels, 1843).

⁴ Bruno Hourst, *La dévotion au Pape et les catholiques français sous le pontificat de Pie IX (1846–1878)* (Rome, 1995). Martin Papenheim, 'Il pontificato di Pio IX e la mobilitazione dei cattolici in Europa', *Rassegna Storica del Risorgimento* 88 (2001), 137–46.

⁵ Roberto Brunelli, 'La dominazione austriaca: 1708–1866', in Adriano Caprioli, Antonio Rimoldi and Luciano Vaccaro (eds.), *Diocesi di Mantova, Storia religiosa della Lombardia* (Brescia, 1986), 151–81, here 177.

partly as a consequence of developments in Rome that an intransigent Catholicism steered or supported from the curia was able to suppress these Catholic traditions and impose uniformity upon the church.

The actual policy of the Roman curia was considerably more pragmatic, however, than its rhetoric would lead us to expect. Research conducted over the last thirty years has drawn a much more differentiated picture of papal policy vis-à-vis the Italian nation-state than the older historiography, with its partisan perspectives, could offer. It is now clear that the high wall of the Vatican concealed heated policy debates within the papal curia.⁶ Theological conservatism and political intransigence were by no means co-extensive. Cardinal Luigi Bilio, for example, the primary author of the *Syllabus* of 1864, operated *within* the curia as the exponent of a pragmatic *modus vivendi* with the Italian state and took the view that the re-establishment of the papal state was completely unrealistic. After the death in 1876 of Cardinal Giacomo Antonelli, state secretary to Pius IX, there was a relaxation of papal policy vis-à-vis Italy. The accession of Leo XIII in 1878 inaugurated an era of more pragmatic and differentiated – if by no means tension-free – relations with the new nation-state. It should be noted that the so-called ‘non expedit’, which forbade the participation of Catholics in the elections of the kingdom and was only lifted under Pius X, never fully prevented the participation of Catholics in parliamentary organs. Moreover, the papal prohibition did not apply to communal political bodies, with their important responsibilities in the spheres of educational and social provision. It was above all here, at local level, that numerous compromises were possible between Catholic and liberal forces.⁷

A closer look at the role played by the Italian governments likewise reveals a greater measure of pragmatism than the popular anticlerical slogans of the day would suggest. The Roman curia was permitted to continue its work without let or hindrance. No effort was made to disturb meetings, to cut off communications or to limit supplies. Even those papal authorities that worked outside the Leonine walls could operate without interference. Notwithstanding the heated public quarrelling over the future of the papal

⁶ Christoph Weber, *Kardinäle und Prälaten in den letzten Jahrzehnten des Kirchenstaates 1846–1878*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart, 1978); Christoph Weber, *Quellen und Studien zur Kurie und zur Vatikanischen Politik unter Leo XIII.* (Tübingen, 1973).

⁷ On Rome, see Andrea Ciampani, *Cattolici e liberali durante la trasformazione dei partiti. La 'questione di Roma' tra politica nazionale e progetti vaticani (1876 – 1883)* (Rome, 2000). See also Gaetano Salvemini, ‘Stato e Chiesa in Italia da Pio IX a Pio XI’, in Salvemini, *Scritti di storia moderna e contemporanea*, vol. III: *Stato e Chiesa in Italia* (Milan, 1969), 85–320. On Salvemini, see Jean-Pierre Viallet, ‘Anticléricalisme et laïcité en Italie. Bilan historiographique’, in *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome* 98 (1986), 837–62, here 846.

state, we find in the Law of Guarantee of 1871 many substantial concessions to the Catholic church. Thanks to this law, for example, Italy became the first Catholic European state to renounce the right of nomination (with some exceptions) to church benefices. In all, one can say that the stringent statism of Bismarck remained alien to the Italians – a fact that was reflected in numerous critical commentaries on Prussian church policy in the governmental press of the liberal-conservative *destra*. By contrast with the Germans, liberal-conservative administrations in Italy did not seek the supremacy of the state over the church between 1871 and 1876, but rather their mutual disentanglement,⁸ although there were certainly issues – such as the *Exequatur* (royal confirmation) for bishops – on which the state was less willing to cede ground.

As for the left-liberal governments of the *sinistra* between 1876 and 1896, even admirers of Bismarck within their ranks interpreted the *Kulturkampf* as a purely German problem. Generally speaking, the *sinistra* tended to draw its anticlerical models from France.⁹ But all Roman governments distanced themselves from calls for the complete elimination of the church as a presence in public life, or for the total separation of church and state.

The secularisation of church property and regulations regarding the distribution of church benefices followed a distinctively Italian pattern. In Germany and in France, the secularisation of church wealth had largely been accomplished during the revolutionary and Napoleonic eras, so that in the second half of the nineteenth century expropriations of church property mainly affected newly established orders and religious communities. By contrast, traditional church structures in Italy were only transformed by confiscations of ecclesiastical property after 1848 (in Piedmont) and 1866 (for the Italian states of the *Risorgimento*).¹⁰ Like many other European states, the Italian states had seen efforts at church reform and partial secularisation in the eighteenth century and then under French rule, but these had never really advanced to the point where they effected far-reaching transformations.

By contrast, the expropriations of the second half of the nineteenth century were truly decisive. This was particularly the case for the south, where the expropriation of the *chiese ricettizie*, collegial churches unique to that

⁸ Otto Weiss, 'Il "Kulturkampf" tedesco (1871–1890) nell'opinione pubblica italiana', in Rudolf Lill and Francesco Traniello (eds.), *Il 'Kulturkampf' in Italia e nei paesi di lingua tedesca* (Bologna, 1992), 283–326, esp. 286.

⁹ Weiss, 'Kulturkampf', 304–13.

¹⁰ Giuseppe Corazzini, *La parrocchia nel diritto italiano. Storia, legislazione, dottrina, giurisprudenza* (Turin, 1900).

region, whose positions were reserved for certain families or communities, dealt a serious blow to many localities.¹¹ After the conquest of Rome, assets of the orders, archives, libraries, foundations and, above all, the real estate of the curial congregations were confiscated.¹² In other parts of the country as well, the wholesale secularisation of church wealth – beyond what was necessary to maintain the parochial system – and the simultaneous transformation of church properties into state funds, from which payments could also be withheld, led to far-reaching changes and a heightened dependence upon the state's favour.¹³ Appointments to church benefices could only be made after the *Exequatur* of the state had formally been sought; in cases where the state (that is, the monarch) claimed the right to nominate the candidate, the pope was also expected to request official permission before installing him. This was especially the case for some episcopal sees. If the pope appointed a bishop without the state's approval, this meant that the bishop lost access to the income of his office, now at the disposition of the state; it also meant that none of the clergy appointed by him could be paid. Pius IX and his cardinal state secretary vehemently rejected these claims on the part of the state. Although it did prove possible to appoint a few bishops after some negotiation, the pope decided in 1871 to go it alone; over the following years (until April 1875), he appointed 105 new bishops for Italy. These bishops were forbidden to seek the authorisation of the state authorities. This set the scene for a serious conflict between the state and the church in Italy, a conflict that was to last until the death of Antonelli in November 1876.¹⁴ It was not only the affected prelates, who in some cases had to be forced to take up their positions, but also the dioceses and parishes that suffered under the intransigence of the papal policy.

The impact of the church–state struggle thus made itself felt in the more intimate context of the localities. In many places, the Catholic faithful themselves attempted, often with the help of local newspapers and journals, or with subscription societies of their own, to feed the local clergy.¹⁵ For the faithful, bishops easily became symbols of the suffering church; for their antagonists, conversely, they were the personification of clerical

¹¹ Cf. Peter Hersche, *Italien im Barockzeitalter (1600–1759). Eine Sozial- und Kulturgeschichte* (Vienna, Cologne and Weimar, 1999), 187.

¹² Carlo M. Fiorentino, *Chiesa e stato a Roma negli anni della destra storica 1870–1876. Il trasferimento della capitale e la soppressione delle corporazioni religiose* (Rome, 1996).

¹³ On the expropriations of church property and their impact on relations between church and state, see Martin Papenheim, *Karrieren in der Kirche. Bischöfe in Italien 1676–1903* (Tübingen, 2001), 66–85.

¹⁴ On the entire process, see *ibid.*, 72–85.

¹⁵ Mario Belardinelli, 'L'exequatur ai vescovi italiani dalla legge delle Guarentigie al 1878', in *Chiesa e religiosità in Italia dopo l'Unità (1861–1878). Atti del quarto Convegno di Storia della Chiesa, La Mendola 31 agosto – 5 settembre 1971*, Comunicazioni I (Milan, 1971), 5–42, esp. 15.

conspiracy. Geremia Bonomelli, for example, who was appointed bishop of Cremona in October 1871, only obtained official authorisation (the *Exequatur*) in June 1874, after some skilful negotiating by the church. Until then he had depended upon the support of Catholic lay organisations. A pilgrimage to the Madonna consolatrice degli afflitti in Caravaggio on 8 May 1873 was used to mount an open demonstration against the state. According to *Il Corriere Cremonese*, 4,000 faithful took part; according to reports from the *Osservatore Cattolico*, the figure was closer to 20,000. Bishop Bonomelli gave an address before the crowd, in which he spoke of passive resistance against anticlerical laws. In return, the masonic lodge of Cremona launched a petition against the machinations of the hierarchy and called for the 'emancipation' of the lesser clergy, demanding specifically that priests should be elected by the population.¹⁶ This latter proposal touched upon an important theme, since it was well known that the election of priests was a traditional Jansenist objective. It had been introduced for a short period under the Cisalpine Republic established in the era of the French Revolution. These anti-Roman tendencies within Catholicism had never been entirely dissipated; indeed, in the course of the *Risorgimento*, they had acquired new momentum, especially in northern Italy. Lombard Catholicism was especially divided and the conflict between state and church was over-layered by tensions within Catholicism. In the diocese of Mantua, for example, there were parishes where priests were elected, although this custom was relinquished after a few years under pressure from the church authorities.¹⁷ There were similar developments in Sicily, where an Old Catholic community was founded in Grotte near Agrigento.

The state authorities 'exploited' the dispute over the authorisation of bishops in order to install a vetting process for pre-canonised bishops. This system, which cost many prelates the official approval of the state, has never been subjected to historical analysis.¹⁸ The attorneys-general of the appeal courts supplied the backbone of the system. All available utterances by the person in question were checked for evidence of undesirable opinions. Particular importance was attached to the individual's reputation among non-intransigent Catholics. In 1888, for example, the priest of Setteforte implored the Ministro di Grazia e Giustizia e dei Culti to see to it that the *Exequatur* was not granted to the new bishops Nicora of Como and

¹⁶ The entire episode is recounted in Carlo Bellò, *Geremia Bonomelli, vescovo di povera santa Chiesa*, 2nd edn. (Brescia, 1975), 46.

¹⁷ Roberto Brunelli, 'Dopo l'annessione all'Italia', in *Diocesi di Mantova*, 183–201, here 187.

¹⁸ The documents can all be found in the Archivio centrale di Stato, Rome, Ministero interno, Direzione Generale degli Affari di Culto.

Vespigniani of Cesena, since they were 'enemies of the fatherland'.¹⁹ In 1895, conversely, a canon of Como begged the minister to grant the *Exequatur* to the new bishop, Valfrè, so that the diocese might be freed of its strict apostolic administrator, the archbishop of Milan, Andrea Ferrari.²⁰ On 20 September 1873, a number of the priests of the diocese of Pavia complained to the authorities of the 'regime despotico' of their bishop, Lucido Parrochi and his 'spirito reazionario'.²¹

Here again we find evidence that the culture wars were by no means the struggle of a monolithic 'liberal bloc' against a homogeneous 'Catholic bloc'. Indeed, to a substantial extent they were an internal Catholic problem. Nor should we assume that state and church were two entities that stood in irreconcilable opposition to each other. Numerous clergymen worked in the employment of the state; others, including bishops, made no secret of their sympathy for the new Italian kingdom. There were always personalities and representatives who mediated between the two fronts. Especially important in this respect were the parliamentarians; these men saw themselves at this time – as indeed their present-day successors still do – above all as representatives in Rome of their region. They were thus often inclined to support the cause of 'their bishop'. This was as true for the parliamentarians of the *destra* as it was for the *sinistra*. We should not forget, moreover, that many of the great families of Italy had representatives in the administrative bodies of both church and state. All this reminds us that the culture wars were not fought along clearly defined lines.

Few issues are better qualified to demonstrate how profound the influence of the church remained on popular life in Italy and how little headway secularist forces had as yet made within Italian society than the conflict over civil marriage, divorce and cremation. These were central points of conflict between church and state; the non-religious organisation of life, the celebration of the key human rites of passage without church ceremony, were two of the great themes of the culture wars across Europe. Yet in Italy little was done to achieve this objective during the nineteenth century. Church influence in this sphere was simply too strong and the penetration of religion into popular cultures too deep. In July 1852, the Piedmontese Camera dei Deputati agreed to introduce civil marriage, but in December of the same year the Senate in Turin rejected the first section of the bill, which allowed a purely civil marriage, by a majority of thirty-nine votes to three. Civil marriage was eventually introduced into the Kingdom of Italy in 1865, against the resistance of the clergy. Divorce, however – an ever more

¹⁹ Ibid., 79.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid., 113.

important objective of all free-thinkers – was still not sanctioned. This was entirely in keeping with the prevalent morality of the middle classes, which on many substantial issues was not far removed from the views of the church.²² Civil funerals had of course always been possible in theory, but interment without church blessing had traditionally been a punishment for a life led in dishonour. Only in the course of the culture wars did it become the ultimate symbolic gesture of radical free-thinking defiance. Associations of free-thinkers promoted secular interment, both through direct participation and through financial support.²³ A bill permitting cremation was presented to the Italian Camera dei Deputati in 1867, but failed to make it even as far as the first reading. Cremation remained, nonetheless, a favourite theme among radical opponents of the church. Even Garibaldi concerned himself intensively with this topic.²⁴ The first cremation took place in Milan on 27 January 1876, when the corpse of the nobleman Alberto Keller was incinerated in the presence of numerous spectators and interested physicians. But this spectacular model was not widely emulated. Here too, the Italians remained true to their traditional rites and customs.

On the question of schooling – one of the important flashpoints of conflict in the nineteenth-century culture wars – the Italian experience was quite different from the German, and, more especially, the Prussian. Biconfessional schools were hardly an issue here. The growth of the state school sector after 1888 was associated to a greater extent than in Germany with a positivist, secular reorientation of educational values. On the other hand, secularist pressures within the school system were less pronounced than in France. In general one can say that secularist attitudes were stronger in Italy than in Germany, but considerably weaker than in France.

The Italian *Risorgimento* turned essentially on the relationship between the north and the south of the country. The unification of the peninsula had entailed the dissolution and absorption of formerly sovereign states with highly distinctive social and cultural identities. In northern Italy, the *Risorgimento* was celebrated as a liberation from foreign rule; in the south it was widely experienced as the imposition of a foreign dominion. This state of affairs had implications for the culture wars. Moreover, while a substantial number of the clergy – especially in the north – were prepared to embrace Italian unification, there were also substantial elements that remained loyal to the vanquished former states and hostile to the new

²² I wish to thank James McMillan for drawing my attention to this important point.

²³ Guido Verucci, *L'Italia laica prima e dopo l'unità, 1848–1876: anticlericalismo, libero pensiero e ateismo nella società italiana* (Rome and Bari, 1979), 212.

²⁴ Verucci, *L'Italia laica*, 235.

political authorities. Just as there were philo-Austrian bishops and priests in the former territories of the Habsburg monarchy, so in the former Kingdom of the Two Sicilies pro-Bourbon elements within the clergy opposed the rule of the 'Piedmontese' despite the threat of dismissals and even violent attacks. On 11 September 1860, for example, when the archbishop of Salerno Antonio Salomona failed to honour the arrival of Garibaldi by personally celebrating the *Te Deum* in the city cathedral, his palace was besieged by a furious crowd, the archiepiscopal coat of arms was smashed and the death-knell was tolled without ceasing until midnight.²⁵ The divide between the political camps, which might or might not correspond to divergent theological orientations, ran right through the middle of the clergy, so that mutual recriminations before the state courts were not uncommon.²⁶

In southern Italy, those who were hostile to the *Risorgimento* were generally individuals who had been affiliated with, or beneficiaries of, the former regime. This group included the bishops, all of whom remained at a distance to the new political order. By contrast, the lower clergy, like the lesser *commercianti* and the intellectuals, were much more inclined to accept the new authorities.

'SPIRITUAL SNIPERS'

As we have seen, even a cursory glance at the flashpoints of the culture war in Italy reveals a highly differentiated pattern of conflicts, actors and attempted resolutions. There can be no doubt that the culture war was played out for the most part within an environment profoundly impregnated with Catholicism; to a certain extent, indeed, it was played out within Catholicism itself. If we wish to gain an understanding of their polarising effect, we must look to the boundary zones of the culture wars, the more extreme positions; in short, we must seek out the 'snipers' who did so much to heighten the intensity of the conflict. At the same time, it is important that we move beyond the discourse of denunciation that was so characteristic of the culture war towards the critical reconstruction of partisan positions. This requires that we operate on two distinct levels: the analysis of 'objective' positions, and that of mutual perceptions in the to and fro of ideological conflict.

That the Jesuits played a uniquely prominent role in the culture war is uncontested. We must nevertheless be wary of simplifications. On the one hand, there were prominent members of the order, such as Carlo

²⁵ Generoso Crisci, *Il cammino della chiesa salernitana nell'opera dei suoi vescovi (sec. V-XX)* (Naples and Rome, 1980), III, 244.

²⁶ See, for example, the accusations by the priest Basilio Nardi against Salomone in 1862: *ibid.*, 258.

Passaglia, for example, who took up vehement independent positions of their own. On the other hand we should not assume that the promptings of the Roman headquarters were always faithfully followed in the provinces. Nevertheless, it is clear that the Jesuits – though they were not alone in this – understood the struggle as a ‘culture war’ in the fullest sense. It is no coincidence that they played an important role in the development of neo-Thomism (or, more precisely, a Jesuit variant of the neo-scholastic tradition) and in the sometimes brutal suppression of other theological tendencies within the church. To the independence of philosophy, to positivism and liberalism, neo-Thomism opposed its own self-sufficient worldview. For the influential Jesuit father Matteo Liberatore, writing in 1853, St Thomas was the greatest of Catholic and Italian philosophers; ‘false’ political utopias, conversely, were denounced as pernicious foreign imports.²⁷ The title of the Jesuit journal *La Civiltà Cattolica*, founded in Naples in 1850, reflected the conviction that this was an era of cultural polarisation, and expressed a monopolistic claim to be the mouthpiece of the Catholic culture in its entirety. While Roman-Jesuit Catholicism constituted itself as a compact worldview, its opponents were and remained disunited.²⁸

Yet, by contrast with the following decades, the ideological climate of the 1850s remained relatively temperate. Pietro Scoppola has highlighted the extent to which Italian anticlericalism drew upon a liberal variant of Catholicism which was neither hostile to the church as such nor atheistic, but also not Rome-centred.²⁹ To a substantial extent, as Scoppola has rightly emphasised, the *Risorgimento* was shaped less by secularist pressures than by the non-Roman, *Catholic* tradition. The notion that the religion of the poor Jesus might find itself opposing the wealth and magnificence of the pope’s church was a commonplace across Catholic Europe. Moreover, conceptions of national unity and the purging of abuses from the church were often closely intertwined, a fact that was reflected in harsh criticisms of the Roman curia.³⁰ This had, in the first instance, nothing to do with atheism or irreligion, although there was no denying that the older form of anticlericalism had the potential to develop in these directions.³¹

Moreover, the Catholic elements of the *Risorgimento* should not be underestimated. Peter Stadler has highlighted the extent to which the Piedmontese policy of ‘a free church in a free state’ drew upon Swiss

²⁷ Francesco Traniello, ‘Cultura ecclesiastica e cultura cattolica’, in *Chiesa e religiosità*, Relazioni II, 3–28, here 22.

²⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, 12.

²⁹ Pietro Scoppola, ‘Laicismo e anticlericalismo’, in *Chiesa e religiosità*, Relazioni II, 225–74.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 233.

³¹ On the intellectual development, for example, of Luigi Settembrini see *ibid.*, 234.

traditions and French liberal Catholic influences.³² A special role was reserved for Giuseppe Mazzini, who expounded a religious republicanism.³³ Only from the 1860s onwards did rationalist and atheist concepts gain ground; nourished in part by opposition to the religious component in Mazzini's thought, they were closely linked with the free-thinking societies, the Società dei Liberi Pensatori, and the prehistory of Italian socialism.³⁴ Independent self-help associations of the early working-class movement in Piedmont and left-wing intellectuals who had separated themselves from Mazzinian spiritualism played an important part in the early development of the free-thinking movement. The first Società del Libero Pensiero was founded in Siena in 1864.³⁵ The movement was quick to attract new adherents. No fewer than sixty-three free-thinking societies attended the so-called 'anti-council' of Naples in 1869.³⁶ By 1871, some 40,000 people throughout Italy identified themselves as free-thinking (*razionalista*), although it should not be assumed that all of these were actively involved in the organisational life of the movement.³⁷ This movement was shaped decisively by German and French influences. From his exile in Naples, the Russian Mikhail Bakunin was involved in the propagation of atheism.³⁸ The free-thinking movement was closely connected with the positivistic, natural-sciences-oriented trends in philosophy that had been gaining ground in Italy since the early 1860s. It was not merely concerned with theoretical debate, but was oriented towards practical objectives. Mass education, the promotion of hygiene and of public health were important areas of activity for this movement which, unlike the old anticlericalism, did not believe that reform would be possible within a Christian framework.³⁹

Among the bizarre formations that flourished in the era of the culture wars was a poetic Satanism. This was by no means an exclusively Italian phenomenon; it was part of a 'black romanticism' that flourished across the European continent. In 1865, for example, the poem 'A Satana' written by Giosuè Carducci was published for the first time; on 8 December 1869, it was issued in a new edition to mark the opening of the first Vatican

³² Peter Stadler, *Cavour. Italiens liberaler Reichsgründer* (Munich, 2001), 99–101.

³³ Verucci, *L'Italia laica*, 270.

³⁴ On the difference between bourgeois-liberal and socialist-republican anticlericalism, see Viallet, 'Anticléricalisme', 837f.

³⁵ Verucci, *L'Italia laica*, 189ff. ³⁶ Scoppola, 'Laicismo', 251. ³⁷ Verucci, *L'Italia laica*, 216f.

³⁸ Franco Damiani, *Bakunin nell'Italia post-unitaria 1864–1867* (Milan, 1977); see also Verucci, *L'Italia laica*, 179ff.

³⁹ Verucci, *L'Italia laica*, 189–90. On developments in the early twentieth century, see Patrizia Audenio, 'Etica laica e rappresentazione del futuro nella cultura socialista dei primi del novecento', in *Società e Storia* 18 (1982), 877–919.

Council.⁴⁰ Pietro Scoppola has interpreted this literature as an index of the continuing dominance of Christian culture, which manifested itself even in such perverted forms.⁴¹ But concealed within this combative Satanism we may also discern traces of older gnostic traditions, which experienced something of a renaissance in the nineteenth century. At the same time, it was the distillation of complex and contradictory reflections on the emergence of an industrial mass society and on the breakthrough of the materialist scientific worldview.

And the freemasons? Were they not the enemies of the church par excellence? The hostile phrase 'Synagogue of Satan' stems from Pius IX.⁴² A nuanced interpretation is called for here, if we are to free ourselves from the distorting effects of culture war polemics. Only in the 1860s did Italian freemasonry begin to acquire a degree of organisational cohesion; only in 1887, with the establishment of the Grande Oriente in Rome, did it achieve a provisional unity at a national level.⁴³ But it would be misleading to suggest that Italian freemasonry was bound by a single and consistent ideological line.⁴⁴ Nor did it make a distinctive contribution to the great events of this era.⁴⁵ Some of the lodges pursued a bourgeois Cavourian line, others were completely apolitical; in the south, where they were led by Garibaldi until 1868, they pursued a radical anti-Catholic line.⁴⁶ Garibaldi's violent, occasionally vulgar and ill thought-through anticlericalism exerted a certain influence within freemasonry over the following decades, but not to the point where one could say that this constituted the 'ideology' of the Italian masonic movement. Only with the grand mastership of Adriano Lemmi (1885–95) did the Grande Oriente d'Italia – or at least its leadership – take on a more trenchantly anti-Catholic, atheistic and anti-Christian orientation.⁴⁷ However, in 1894, when the prime minister and freemason Francesco Crispi sought a rapprochement with the Catholics, Lemmi defended the right of the brother to his own political convictions.

⁴⁰ Giosuè Carducci, *Opere scelte*, vol. I: *Poesie*, ed. Mario Saccenti (Turin, 1993), 247–60. The first edition appeared in Pistoia in 1865. A small edition was then released in 1867. The issue dedicated to the opening of Vatican I appeared on 8 December 1869 in Bologna.

⁴¹ Here and in what follows, Scoppola, 'Laicismo', 251–2.

⁴² See the encyclical *Etsi multa* of 21 November 1873: Jérôme Rousse-Lacordaire, *Rome et les francs-maçons, histoire d'un conflit* (Paris, 1996), 109.

⁴³ Jean-Pierre Viallet, 'Anatomie d'une obédience maçonnique: le Grand-Orient d'Italie (1870–1890 circa)', in *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome* 90 (1978), 171–236, here 181.

⁴⁴ See Scoppola, 'Laicismo', 260–2; Camillo Brezzi, 'Orientamenti della massoneria intorno al 1870', in *Chiesa e religiosità*, Comunicazioni II, 307–35.

⁴⁵ Brezzi, 'Orientamenti', 313; cf. also Viallet, 'Anatomie', 172.

⁴⁶ Cf. Aldo Mola, *Storia della massoneria italiana dalle origini: ai nostri giorni* (Bompiani, 1992), 111ff.

⁴⁷ Brezzi, 'Orientamenti', 312–13.

Upheavals and dissonance within the Grande Oriente led to Lemmi's resignation in 1896 – at about the same time as his friend Crispi tendered his resignation as prime minister. Italian freemasonry largely remained a movement of the lesser and middling bourgeoisie under the leadership of bourgeois notables. It was quite different in this respect from the socialist-democratic movement of the *Liberi Pensatori*.⁴⁸ Despite regional linkages between the socialists and masonic organisations,⁴⁹ leading free-thinkers tended to distance themselves from freemasonry and aimed instead to create a national organisation of the atheist left. These efforts failed, as did attempts from the same quarter to join forces with the Marxist International.⁵⁰

WITH DRUMS AND BUGLES

The culture wars were above all a media spectacle. It was never simply a question of consolidating one's own viewpoint or of demonstrating the rectitude of one's allegiances; the culture wars were always a communicative phenomenon. Mass communication was the weapon with which one attacked real and imagined enemies. To extend the military metaphor: the bugles and drums of the media spectacle were as important to the participants in the conflict as the heavy guns of legislative or police action.

Newspapers were without doubt the most important medium for all actors in the culture wars. This era saw an explosion in the quantity of ideologically motivated print. Northern Italy in particular was flooded with new titles, many of them with small print-runs and of short duration. Every ideological tendency had its publication. The journals of this era appealed above all to the middling and lesser bourgeoisie. No further distinctions were drawn as to occupational groups or social status. In Italy, journals on the Catholic side, regardless of their specific ideological orientation, were often run by clergymen, who could hope thereby to obtain recognition and credit for their contribution to the struggle.⁵¹ A systematic analysis of this press has not yet been undertaken, so that it is not yet possible to reconstruct with any confidence the relationships between different papers, or the specific networks of regional and local debate. These publications were certainly not concerned solely with the struggle against 'external enemies'. The struggle against renegades in one's own ranks – and this was typical of the mood of the era – was at least as important. The *Osservatore Cattolico* edited by Davide Albertario in Milan, was the foremost intransigent journal of Lombardy; it was as unpopular among the liberal bishops as

⁴⁸ Ibid., 326; Mola, *Storia*, 173; Viallet, 'Anatomic', 210–12. ⁴⁹ Viallet, 'Anatomic', 213.

⁵⁰ Verucci, *L'Italia laica*, 223–5. ⁵¹ Papenheim, *Karrieren*, 292.

it was with the state authorities.⁵² *Il Catechista Cattolico*, by contrast, edited by Giambattista Scalabrini, bishop of Piacenza, represented the moderate wing. The various secular groups that established themselves in competition with the Catholic confraternities and the Opera dei Congressi (a lay organisation founded under papal leadership in 1874) also had their own organs. There were also other, 'independent' Catholic publications. On the opposing side, the most important laicist organ was Luigi Stefanoni's journal *Il Libero Pensiero, Giornale dei Razionalisti*, founded in Milan in 1867 and later published in Parma.⁵³ The annexation of Rome acted as a catalyst upon the press. Pietro Scoppola has identified 342 new journals in Rome alone after 20 September 1870, including numerous anti-church and anticlerical publications, some with fanciful names, such as *Mefistofele* or *Diavolo Color di Rosa*.⁵⁴

Battles were conducted not only through texts, but also through images. Here again we enter largely uncharted terrain. It would appear that the church-oriented journals tended more towards traditional iconography, whereas the anticlerical press featured caricatures of the enemy. Most such images operated with the topos of an inverted world, or with time-honoured stereotypes such as the lusty monk and gluttonous prelate. Anticlerical theatre pieces were structured along the same lines. After the conquest of Rome in 1870, a host of polemical farces were performed which aimed to make a laughing stock of church and pope or to arouse outrage at their misdeeds.⁵⁵

Lastly, there were the demonstrations. The best known were of course the Catholic processions, which could look back on a long tradition. They functioned both as acts of public penance and as a means of heightening the awareness of solidarity in the face of persecution among the faithful. One of the most distinctive and fundamental features of ultramontane Catholicism in the culture wars era was its adoption of the language of victimhood. As for the secularist groupings, these often assembled under an open sky, not only for practical, but also for dramaturgical reasons. There was a sense of being at one with the order of the world.⁵⁶ The anticlericals

⁵² Davide Albertario was locked in a protracted conflict with Bonomelli, bishop of Cremona. In 1894, he was arrested on account of the socially motivated popular disturbances there. In the Archivio Segreto Vaticano alone, the 'Albertario case' fills four cartons: Archivio Segreto Vaticano (ASV) Spogli di Pontefici, Spogli Leone XIII. Miscellanea. Don Davide Albertario, busta III–VI (cartons I und II appear to be missing – cf. Papenheim, *Karrieren*, 23).

⁵³ Guido Verucci, 'Anticlericalismo, libero pensiero e ateismo nel movimento operaio e socialista italiano (1861–1878)' in *Chiesa e religiosità*, Relazioni II, 177–224, here 197.

⁵⁴ Scoppola, 'Laicismo', 268. ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 271.

⁵⁶ On the tradition of celebrating in the open air, see Mona Ozouf, *La fête révolutionnaire 1789–99* (Paris, 1976), 149–87.

were of course at a disadvantage inasmuch as they had no traditional liturgical basis around which to structure their public performances; a secular festival calendar had to be developed. There were of course many spontaneous anticlerical tumults, but otherwise it was necessary to wait until a provocation from the Catholic side provided the occasion for a demonstration. The opening of the First Vatican Council, for example, provoked a host of anti-church demonstrations throughout the entire Italian peninsula, some of which were elaborately organised – as in Florence – with specially designed flags and banners.⁵⁷ The commemoration of heroes and the unveiling of monuments also provided a welcome occasion for political demonstrations. The bourgeois cult of monuments gained ground in Italy in the course of the *Risorgimento* – comparatively late, in other words, by European standards. Thereafter it accompanied every stage of the process of unification. This secular practice, which represented in some respects a revival of ancient pagan and Renaissance forms of memorialisation, provided a welcome alternative to the church's cult of saints. Demonstrations of virtuous political sentiment were often followed and rounded off by a specially organised banquet. Indoor events were a further defining characteristic of the bourgeois associational movements involved in the culture wars: educational programmes for example, featuring lectures that concerned themselves with fundamental philosophical questions. Together with journals, events of this kind propagated a certain philosophical and scientific knowledge among the bourgeoisie, just as the church newspapers, for their part, propagated Catholic dogma. We could see this as an index of the ideologisation of society. But a more persuasive reading would place the emphasis on the accelerated dissemination of knowledge during this era, which far exceeded the late eighteenth-century expansion of the public sphere.⁵⁸ Throughout the European countries, this new culture of knowledge encompassed not only science and philosophy but also history, philology and the increasingly broad consumption of lexical and encyclopaedic knowledge.

In the final analysis, however, the emergent culture of the nation could not dispense with the old customs. The most important was still the *Te Deum*. The celebration of the *Te Deum* on specific festive occasions had played an important communicative function in traditional Europe (the people might learn, for example of a victory won by the king); it conveyed a certain interpretation of events; it strengthened the bond between ruler and people and it served to sanction both the event and the

⁵⁷ Scoppola, 'Laicismo', 257.

⁵⁸ Cf. Jürgen Habermas, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit: Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft* (Neuwied, 1962; numerous reprints).

existing order of authority. Why should the *Risorgimento* dispense with this well-tried device? During the phase of annexations, when new territories were incorporated into the Italian kingdom, religious ceremonies of this kind were regularly celebrated in the conquered territories, following the traditional practice on the occasion of a change of rule.⁵⁹ There were many points of contact between the performances of state and church authority – the journeys of the king and queen, for example, during which the comportment of local clergy was always a delicate problem; church processions, which might stir fears of unrest in a local official. This was a war without boundaries, that took place not only at the level of church–state relations, but also between individual communities of faith: riotous carousing during Lent, penitential services scheduled to coincide with the unveiling of monuments, Sunday-morning marches. The ultimate penalty in this struggle was exclusion – arrest or banishment by the state authority, an act whose symbolic force extended far beyond the coercion applied in any specific case. Clergymen were the main victims of such measures, especially after 1866, when Venice had fallen, Rome seemed on the point of falling and the state began to confront its enemies more directly.⁶⁰ The most potent weapon of the church was the refusal of sacraments and of church burial. We have seen that the culture wars involved the interaction of several distinct elements: broad partisan groupings that never lost sight of their pragmatic objectives, ideologically polarised snipers who raised the stakes in the conflict and the bugles and drums of the multi-media spectacle. But how exactly did the interaction of these elements work? In order to answer this question, we turn to the following case study.

A MONUMENT FOR GIORDANO BRUNO

The history of the Giordano Bruno monument unveiled on the Campo de' Fiori in Rome on Whit Sunday 1889 exemplifies the complexity of the culture wars in Italy.

In 1884, Leo XIII had once again denounced freemasonry in the encyclical *Humanum genus*. In 1885, under the leadership of Adriano Lemmi, the masonic lodges had adopted an emphatically anti-church orientation. In 1887, the mason Francesco Crispi had become the Italian prime minister. Efforts launched during the same year to effect a rapprochement between

⁵⁹ For an important discussion of these issues, see Michèle Fogel, *Les cérémonies de l'information: dans la France du XVIe au milieu du XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1989). See also Scoppola, 'Laicismo', 239.

⁶⁰ Scoppola, 'Laicismo', 249. In papal Rome too there were a number of executions: Giuseppe Monti and Gaetano Tognetti, for example, were decapitated in Rome in December 1868, because they had carried out a bomb attack on a papal barracks.

church and state had quickly foundered. Leopoldo Torlonia, the mayor of Rome, was pressured by Crispi to leave office in December 1887 because he had congratulated the pope on behalf of the city of Rome on the occasion of the golden jubilee of his ordination. The hard-won successes of men like Torlonia in constructing a fragile equilibrium between Catholics and moderate liberals were thus undone.⁶¹ In policy, too, there were important changes. In 1887, shortly after taking office, Crispi had travelled to Germany in order to meet Bismarck. In the following year, a military convention was agreed within the framework of the Triple Alliance.

For Pope Leo XIII, this situation appeared suffused with threat. For some time – at least since the winter of 1880/1, he had been thinking of leaving Rome. The reason lay in his fear of a socialist-republican seizure of power in Italy, an apprehension that was further sharpened by a vociferous campaign to extend the franchise. Leo XIII feared that the consequence of franchise reform would be a victory for the radical secularisers and the end of the monarchy in Italy. As a result, the Congregation for Extraordinary Affairs, a kind of subcommittee responsible to the cardinal state secretary and the pope for the political concerns of the Holy See, had been more or less permanently occupied since February 1881 with developing plans for a possible departure of the pope from Rome. Evacuation plans and emergency regulations were drawn up for the government of the Catholic church.⁶² The consolidation of Italy's international position and the tense relationship between state and church during 1887 further intensified the climate of fear in the Vatican.

The idea of erecting a monument to Giordano Bruno in Rome stemmed from a student group founded in March 1876.⁶³ Bruno had been burnt at the stake in 1600 on the Campo de' Fiori on account of his pantheistic philosophical teachings.⁶⁴ During the second half of the nineteenth century, masonic and free-thinking circles attempted to establish him as one of the great intellectual figures of the Italian nation, comparable with Voltaire for the French and Goethe for the Germans. But Bruno also stood for the victims of papalism, intolerance and fanaticism. The Bruno cult was thus intended to furnish an alternative to the ecclesiastical cult of saints. The Bruno cult suffered, however, from one notable drawback, namely that there

⁶¹ Ciampani, *Cattolici*, 450.

⁶² The most important documents can be found in the Vatican's archive of the Congregation for Extraordinary Affairs: Archivio della Congregazione per gli Affari Straordinari (AAEES), Stati Ecclesiastici, fasc. 329–95.

⁶³ My account is based on the excellent discussion in Lars Berggren and Lennart Sjöstedt, *L'ombra dei grandi. Monumenti e politica monumentale a Roma (1870–1895)* (Rome, 1996).

⁶⁴ On the following, see Mola, *Storia*, 196–8.

appeared no obvious connection between the philosopher from Nola and Italian culture, language or political unification. The relationship between the 'national Bruno' and Bruno the critical theologian remained unclear. Those European intellectuals who supported the plan to erect a monument tended therefore to see it as a demonstration in support of science and freedom of thought, rather than as a symbol of Italian nationhood. In the words of Ferdinand Gregorovius, a sympathetic German observer:

The Giordano monument will stand as a warning to future enemies of [freedom of thought and of conscience]: that the hand of the world's clock can no longer be turned back, that science has become a triumphant force in the world, and that no human institution, however great and strong it may be, can prevail against the tempestuous waves of the new life of the peoples if it eschews the rejuvenating principles of modern society.⁶⁵

The Bruno activists decided to launch an international subscription campaign. A number of free-thinkers, especially in England, responded with donations. But, generally speaking, the campaign was not a great success. The more conservatively oriented municipal authorities did not dare to sabotage the monument project openly, but they prevaricated and confined themselves to a merely symbolic contribution. Concerned not to endanger the co-existence of the various interest groups and the fabric of compromise that made it possible to govern the city of Rome, the city authorities decided not to place a suitable location at the disposal of the monument committee. Public interest in the proposed monument gradually dwindled. The death of Pius IX and the accession of the more conciliatory Gioacchino Pecci to the papal throne relegated the Bruno project to the margins.⁶⁶

The second initiative for a Bruno monument stemmed from university circles.⁶⁷ In April 1884, student protests broke out when the director of the University of Naples took part in an academic celebration of the Catholic Associazione Universitaria San Tommaso d'Aquino. A counter-grouping, the Circolo Universitario Giordano Bruno was founded in response. In Rome, too, the university had to be closed on account of student unrest. By the end of May a committee had been founded in the capital to coordinate the construction of a monument for Giordano Bruno. The freemason Ettore Ferrari was chosen as the artist. The committee succeeded in winning the support of 278 renowned international figures, among them Victor

⁶⁵ Ferdinand Gregorovius, *Römische Tagebücher 1852–1889*, ed. and with commentary by Hanno-Walter Kruft and Markus Völkel (Munich, 1991), 431.

⁶⁶ Berggren and Sjöstedt, *L'ombra*, 34. ⁶⁷ The following account is based on *ibid.*, 125ff.

Hugo, Ernest Renan, Ernst Haeckel and Ferdinand Gregorovius. In 1887, the Grande Oriente came out in open support of the campaign. Yet success continued to elude the committee, partly because of the unhelpful attitude of the municipal authorities. Mayor Torlonia's opposition to the project brought him into open conflict with Prime Minister Crispi, its foremost political sponsor. The royal court, moreover, was ill-disposed towards the enterprise. Crispi succeeded nonetheless in forcing the resignation of the mayor on 30 December 1887. The public impact of this *démarche* was all the greater for the fact that it occurred just as pilgrimages organised by Catholic organisations set forth towards Rome in order to celebrate the golden jubilee of the pope's ordination as a priest, and to demonstrate the solidarity of the masses of the faithful with their pontiff.⁶⁸ Whereas a Roman city council vote in May narrowly failed to support the motion to erect a monument,⁶⁹ by December 1888 a majority of the councillors was ready to provide a suitable location.⁷⁰

The unveiling ceremony began on the eve of the feast of Pentecost. At five o'clock in the afternoon, a gathering formed in front of the Palazzo dell'Esposizione, where the former priest Veronese Gaetano Trezze gave a long address on Giordano Bruno. A telegram with greetings from Ernest Renan was read out. In the evening a conference took place on the subject of Bruno's scientific works.⁷¹ The unveiling itself took place on 9 June, Whit Sunday. The *Civiltà Cattolica* published a detailed report. A procession of some six thousand persons, consisting mainly of delegates from the masonic lodges and the Italian communes, but also from student committees and other associations, sporting a total of 1,970 flags and accompanied by the music of ninety-seven bands, set off in the direction of the Campo de' Fiori. After further speeches, the monument was solemnly unveiled. This was followed by a banquet and a gala celebration. On 10 June there was an excursion to Tivoli and the programme ended with a conference organised by Giovanni Bobbio on the subject of ethics from Dante to Bruno. In its structure, the celebration conformed to established patterns of practice, albeit with a stronger intellectual orientation than most.

Closer analysis of these events reveals that the celebration unfolded within a highly charged political setting. There were intensive security precautions. The government went to great lengths to prevent any mishaps during the festival. Troops and police, partly in uniform, partly in plain clothes, were deployed to enforce order. The Vatican was sealed off, a measure that was doubtless intended not only as a security precaution but also

⁶⁸ Ciampani, *Cattolici*, 453. ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 456. ⁷⁰ *La Civiltà Cattolica* 40 (1889), vol. 1, 110.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 40 (1889), vol. 3, 104–106; note however that the dates are erroneous. See also Berggren and Sjöstedt, *L'ombra*, 170ff.

as a demonstration of power vis-à-vis the curia.⁷² Most telling of all, perhaps, was the fact that Prime Minister Crispi, who had earlier been such a prominent and vocal supporter of the project and who had forced the resignation of the conciliatory Roman mayor, chose not to take part in the celebrations.⁷³ It was as if he now wished to avoid further burdening his relations with the church. The streets were left – with the necessary security measures – to the masses, while the political and intellectual leadership remained in the background: nowhere, for example, is it reported that the freemason grand master Lemmi took part in this celebration which his lodge, the Grande Oriente, had so energetically promoted. The international intelligentsia was also strikingly reticent. Of the foreign members of the festival committee, none participated personally in the unveiling in Rome. Ferdinand Gregorovius ascribed this to the ‘emphatically anti-Catholic and anti-church character’ of the festival.⁷⁴ Yet it was precisely this aspect of the event that furnished the pope and the curia with the opportunity to draw public attention once more to the plight of the Holy See. On the day of the sacrilege itself, Leo XIII knelt in prayer and implored God with the words of Jesus on the Cross, ‘non enim sciunt quid faciunt’ (Luke 23: 34), to forgive the blasphemers. The events of Whit Sunday 1889 intensified Leo XIII’s fear of an occupation of the Vatican. There was even talk of plans to assassinate the Holy Father.⁷⁵ Just as in previous years, evacuation plans were developed, along with secret contacts with various European governments. Leo XIII himself continually urged his curial functionaries to busy themselves with preparations for his possible departure and there were detailed plans outlining how the church would be governed in the temporary absence of its pope and how a conclave would be organised, if necessary, outside the city.⁷⁶ This was not merely a phobic over-reaction to events. It was a cleverly conceived political game. Rumours to the effect that the pope might ultimately leave Rome were deliberately disseminated. In a speech before the Consistory on 30 June 1889, Leo XIII claimed that the security of his person was under threat; the text of this address was subsequently passed to *Civiltà Cattolica* for publication.⁷⁷ Crispi is said to have responded with a nonchalant comment to the effect that the pope could leave the country in safety whenever he wished,⁷⁸ but the government naturally knew that the departure of the pontiff from Rome would be a serious diplomatic setback.

The complexity of the political fabric within which the Bruno festival took place stands in stark contrast to the manichaeian simplicity of the

⁷² Ibid. ⁷³ Berggren and Sjöstedt, *L’ombra*, 171. ⁷⁴ Gregorovius, *Römische Tagebücher*, 430.

⁷⁵ AAEESS, *Stati Ecclesiastici*, fasc. 361. ⁷⁶ See esp. *ibid.*, fasc. 361–4.

⁷⁷ *La Civiltà Cattolica* 40 (1889), vol. 3, 129–37, here 134–5. ⁷⁸ Ibid.

propaganda it generated: on Whit Sunday, the feast of the Holy Spirit, enemies of the church had glorified the spirit of science. Just as the protagonists of the project mobilised European intellectuals, above all in university circles, to participate in the unveiling of the monument, so the opponents of the project organised their own adherents.⁷⁹ *Civiltà Cattolica* did not scruple to play upon the fears of the populace. Earthquakes and hurricanes, it was said, were ominous signs. A family had been trapped in a landslide near Bergamo after bad weather; a train had been delayed in Valle Seriana on account of a storm; the streets of Novara were flooded and in Nola, the very birthplace of Giordano Bruno, gale-force winds had been reported: were these not signs that Bruno was a bringer of ill luck, a *jettatore*, as one says in Naples?⁸⁰

For the promoters of the monument, the occasion was a total success. It has since remained a fixture in the collective memory of Italian freemasonry, whose website today still shows a photograph of the unveiling. In the year 2000, on the occasion of the four-hundredth anniversary of the philosopher's death, the freemasons organised a chain of memorial events across the country.⁸¹ Public commentaries from the Catholic side were all too obviously intended to undermine the reputation of the ideological opponent. *Civiltà Cattolica* reported smugly that although there had been verbal attacks on the pope and the church in the streets of Rome on the eve of the unveiling, the Romans as a whole had refrained from joining the procession, preferring to remain passive bystanders. Few flags were to be seen in windows. The Via Nazionale had been left undecorated.⁸² Apart from the participants themselves, the streets of Rome were largely empty. The Jesuit journal was full of praise for the 'popolo Romano' which had taught the organisers of the event such a hard lesson: the funereal tranquillity of the streets had made it clear that nothing in the world would make the Romans bow down to 'the fetish' on the Campo de' Fiori.⁸³ In a speech to the Consistory, the pope lamented bitterly the events in Rome. Bruno – whose name was not explicitly mentioned – had been a heretic and a man of 'estrema corruzione e malvagità' (a man of extremely corrupt and wicked character). By erecting a monument to him, the freemasons were attempting to transform Rome from the 'capitale del mondo cattolico' into a 'centro d'ogni empietà e d'ogni profano costume' (from the capital of the Catholic world to the centre of every kind of faithlessness and profanity).⁸⁴

⁷⁹ On actions of this kind cf. *ibid.* 40 (1889), vol. 2, 610–12.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 745.

⁸¹ For information, consult <http://www.grandeoriente.it>.

⁸² *La Civiltà Cattolica* 40 (1889), vol. 3, 105.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 107. ⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 129–37.

The Peruvian ambassador sent the Holy Father a letter in which he expressed his regret at the events in Rome.⁸⁵ From the entire Catholic world, *Civiltà Cattolica* reported, telegrams to the pope poured in, expressing support for him and condemning the sacrilege of the monument.⁸⁶ In Germany, where the passions of the *Kulturkampf* had not entirely subsided, the Roman events were a welcome pretext for mobilising the faithful in support of papacy and church. There were some grotesque episodes: 'In Rosenheim in Bavaria, [Ferdinand Gregorovius reported,] the issue provoked a delightful misunderstanding: the peasants there prayed in their church for Giordano Bruno, whom they took to be a man who had suffered for many centuries in Purgatory and was now to be redeemed from this state by prayer on the orders of the pope.'⁸⁷

CULTURE WARS IN ITALY: BETWEEN PRAGMATISM AND DRAMATISATION

The conflicts surrounding the Giordano Bruno monument in Rome demonstrate the complexity of the culture war in Italy. Organised in a dramatic fashion to maximise public impact, events like the unveiling of the monument on the Campo de' Fiori in 1889 depended both for their dramaturgy and for their reception upon a friend-foe dichotomy. Fanaticism and intolerance on the one side, blasphemy and sacrilege on the other, were the slogans flung at the enemy. Manichaean language – the battle of light against darkness – featured in the discourse of the chief spokesmen of both camps. We touched earlier on the language of the radical opponents of the church and its dependence upon time-honoured clichés of priestly corruption and immorality. The organ of ultramontane Catholicism, *Civiltà Cattolica*, used a somewhat more refined semantics than its opponents. Freemasonry was identified as the main antagonist, but it was denounced as 'the wicked Masonic sect' (*rea setta massonica*),⁸⁸ implying that the movement amounted to little more than a relatively minor aberration from the truth. Since the church felt itself to be at the centre of a single, all-embracing truth, protests against this monopolistic claim were denounced as 'attacks' (*attese*), as an 'insult against the most holy religion, the true church and its visible head'. And these opponents of the church erected monuments – in Rome of all places! – to 'the most impudent enemies of God and of human society'.⁸⁹ The spokesman for Prime Minister Crispi was characterised as

⁸⁵ Ibid., 232. ⁸⁶ Ibid., 107. ⁸⁷ Gregorovius, *Römische Tagebücher*, 431.

⁸⁸ E.g. *La Civiltà Cattolica* 40 (1889), vol. 3, 107. ⁸⁹ E.g. *ibid.*, 351.

the representative not only of freemasonry, but also of 'the Jews' – linkages of this kind between anti-masonry and antisemitism were by no means unusual. Language as potentially denunciatory as this had a long half-life.

The events of June 1889 also show how central the Roman question was to the ideological and political conflict between church and state. This was not merely a function of the practical consequences for papal sovereignty of the formation of the Italian nation-state. It was also a consequence of the way in which the Roman church leadership repeatedly focused all conflict on this specific issue. In his address, cited above, of 30 June 1889, Leo XIII made an explicit connection between the unveiling of the monument and the fall of Rome.⁹⁰ Those who dared to question the necessity of maintaining (or retrieving) the Papal States were roundly denounced.⁹¹

Political realities were of course much more complex than this rhetoric, with its crude binary schema, would suggest. The rhetoric served for the construction of images of the enemy and for the consolidation of coalitions. That it was only a part of the interactions between the two camps, and that beyond the polemics pragmatic concessions were still possible, is in itself unsurprising. But it must be said that the chasm between intransigent declamations on the one hand, and the willingness to compromise on the other, was particularly pronounced in Italy. The culture wars were not structured around stable fronts; a great many of the actors elude schematic categorisation. Political opportunism and highly differentiated attitudes to the young nation-state generated a spectrum of different standpoints that spanned the gap between the most doctrinaire representatives of both camps. This in turn meant that mediation between the two fronts was almost always possible. As mayor of Rome, we have seen that Leopoldo Torlonia played such a mediating role; during his period of activity as a communal politician (1876–87), he belonged among the *liberali moderati*.⁹² The provocative plan to erect a monument to the philosopher from Nola in the centre of Rome met with apathy or mild hostility from most citizens.

The organisation of the so-called 'anti-council' in Naples to mark the opening of the First Vatican Council in December 1869 demonstrates quite clearly how absurd it would be to speak of a laicist-anticlerical-liberal 'front' in Italy. This 'anti-council', which stemmed from an initiative of the parliamentary deputy Giuseppe Napoleone Ricciardi, was by no means the

⁹⁰ Ibid., 129–37.

⁹¹ Cf. Martin Papenheim, 'Römische Frage und römisches Index: Das Gutachten zum päpstlichen Verbot von Geremias Bonomellis "Roma, l'Italia e la realtà delle cose" 1889, publiziert aus dem Archiv der Indexkongregation', *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken* 77 (1997), 362–411.

⁹² Cf. also Ciampini, *Cattolici*, 66.

only protest provoked by the opening of the Roman council, but it was certainly the most widely remarked.⁹³ The organisers chose to locate their event in Naples, the Italian city of internationalists, socialists and anarchists, most notably Mikhail Bakunin and Alexander Herzen. The congress was scheduled to begin on 8 December 1869, so as to coincide exactly with the opening of the Vatican Council. It was supported by sixty-three Italian free-thinking societies and a further twenty-seven foreign secularist groups, together with masonic lodges and numerous individuals. There were words of greeting from the great French secularists: Victor Hugo, Jules Michelet, Edgar Quinet, Jules Ferry, Emile Littré. Giuseppe Garibaldi, always happy to join an anti-Catholic action, pledged his support. Generally speaking, however, the intellectuals and politicians were strikingly reluctant to play a highly visible role. Giuseppe Ferrari, for example, refused, on the grounds that he had no wish to emulate the behaviour of the enemy. The masonic grand master, Ludovico Frapolli, did not attend the occasion. The government was not involved in the event, and the local authorities kept a close eye on all plans and preparations. It can hardly have been a coincidence that the Carlo Felice Theatre, which had been chosen as a suitable location, was suddenly found to be unavailable on the symbolic opening date, so that the congress had to be postponed by one day. When, on the next day, a speech by a French speaker elicited choruses of '*Viva Italia, viva la Francia repubblicana*', the police inspector in attendance saw fit to close the congress down. Camillo Brezzi has observed how skilfully the authorities handled this problem. It would of course have been very easy simply to forbid the congress from the outset, but it was far more effective to close it on whatever pretext was available. The authorities thereby also signalled their determination to neutralise the threat posed by republican radicalism.⁹⁴ Despite a degree of sympathy for the anticlerical orientation of the event, fear of socialism and the desire to establish a *modus vivendi* with the Holy See were reason enough in the eyes of the government to put a swift and spectacular stop to the anti-council. Virtually no-one in a position of political responsibility wished to see his efforts to accommodate the conflicting forces within Italian society jeopardised by the bugles and trumpets of the culture wars.

This readiness within the political leadership to seek compromise had a muting effect on Italian radicalism. Since the *Risorgimento*, Italian culture had been marked by a tendency to assert an intimate relationship between

⁹³ On the following, see Mola, *Storia*, 134–40, Scoppola, 'Laicismo', 258–9; Brezzi, 'Orientamenti', 320–6.

⁹⁴ Brezzi, 'Orientamenti', 325.

revolution and tradition.⁹⁵ Societal upheaval, so the argument ran, had given birth to new political forms which made possible the preservation of traditional values. A radical secularism thus stood no chance. A further factor, for the last third of the nineteenth century, was the fear of socialism that haunted both the church and the liberal bourgeoisie. By contrast with the Grand Orient de France at the end of the nineteenth century, the Grande Oriente d'Italia made no efforts to achieve a rapprochement with the working-class movement or with proletarian secularism.⁹⁶ It remained for the most part a movement of the middle classes. The Catholic church was certainly more successful in mobilising support amongst the lower social strata, but anti-socialism was a defining theme of its social and political engagement throughout the nineteenth century and into the second half of the twentieth. To be sure, the culture war between liberals and Catholics continued, but it gradually became an operational theatre of subordinate importance, as the liberals were displaced by radical republicans and socialists, as in the Romagna, where there were especially violent confrontations in 1898. After the October elections of 1904 there were once again sharp socialist attacks on the Catholics.⁹⁷ In the meanwhile, the fear of the left that had such deep roots, both within the curia and in Italian freemasonry, obstructed clear recognition of the threat that was now increasingly posed from the right. The attitude of Italian freemasonry to early twentieth-century fascism was ambivalent.⁹⁸ The Catholic church, for its part, made its peace with the Italian nation-state; in 1929 it signed the Lateran Treaties with the fascist authorities.

⁹⁵ This is the view taken, for example, by Marcello Veneziani, *La rivoluzione conservatrice in Italia. Genesi e sviluppo della 'ideologia italiana' fino ai nostri giorni. Nuova edizione accresciuta e aggiornata* (Varese, 1994). On this question, see Michael Thöndl, 'Bewahrung durch Umbruch: Die "Konservative Revolution" in Italien', in: Hans J. Lietzmann (ed.), *Moderne Politik. Politikverständnisse im 20. Jahrhundert* (Opladen, 2001), 81–102, here 94–5.

⁹⁶ Martin Papenheim, 'Zirkel, Winkelmaß und Trikolore. Politik und Freimaurerei in Frankreich während der III. Republik', *Internationale Freimaurerforschung* 2002; Viallet, 'Anatomie', 189, 220–2; Adrian Lyttelton, 'An Old Church and a New State: Italian Anticlericalism (1876–1915)', *European History Quarterly* 2 (1983), 225–48; here 231.

⁹⁷ Lyttelton, 'Old Church', 234; Luigi Lotti, *I repubblicani in Romagna dal 1894 al 1915* (Faenza, 1957); Hartmut Ullrich, *La classe politica nella crisi di partecipazione dell'Italia giolittiana, 1909–1913*, 3 vols. (Rome, 1979); Hartmut Ullrich, *Le elezioni del 1913 a Roma. I liberali fra massoneria e Vaticano* (Milan, 1972).

⁹⁸ Mola, *Storia*, 362–4.

*Enemies at the gate: The Moabit Klostersturm and the Kulturkampf: Germany**

Manuel Borutta

Gentlemen, anyone who believes in our day and age that he must carry his religion around with him, anyone who feels obliged to wear a particular dress, who swears grotesque vows, who bands together in herds, and who, when all is said and done, swears unconditional loyalty to Rome, the bitterest enemy of our young German and Prussian glory – such people can have no place in our state. That is why I say: away with them as fast as possible. (Enthusiastic cheers).¹

During the Prussian Landtag debate of 7 May 1875 on the prohibition of religious orders and congregations, the National Liberal deputy Georg Jung lent expression to a central feature of the *Kulturkampf*:² the symbolic exclusion of Catholicism from the hegemonial version of national culture. This process had been underway since the end of the eighteenth century. To enlightened Protestant North Germans, Catholicism appeared exotic and alien.³ In the nineteenth century, the ‘orientalist’⁴ image of a static, historyless Catholic world served as a foil to the construction of a modern identity that was secular but confessionally coloured. While the decisive protagonists of the *Kulturkampf*, the liberals, saw Protestantism – which for

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¹ *Preußischer Landtag. Haus der Abgeordneten 1875. Stenographische Berichte*, vol. III, 1768.

² The most influential early public use of the term *Kulturkampf* was that of the pathologist Rudolf Virchow, co-founder of the left-liberal *Deutsche Fortschrittspartei*; see *Preußischer Landtag. Haus der Abgeordneten 1872/3. Stenographische Berichte*, I, 631. Earlier uses by other authors are discussed in Adalbert Wahl, *Vom Bismarck der 70er Jahre* (Tübingen, 1920), 6–7; Claudia Lepp, *Protestantisch-liberaler Aufbruch in die Moderne. Der deutsche Protestantenverein in der Zeit der Reichsgründung und des Kulturkampfes* (Gütersloh, 1996), 328.

³ Hans-Wolf Jäger, ‘Der reisende Enzyklopädist und seine Kritiker. Friedrich Nicolais “Beschreibung einer Reise durch Deutschland und die Schweiz im Jahre 1781”’, *Jahrbuch der deutschen Schillergesellschaft* 26 (1982), 104–24.

⁴ Borrowing the paradigm developed by Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York, 1995), we may characterise German anti-Catholicism as an intra-occidental orientalism.

most was their own confessional affiliation – as compatible with modernity, they perceived Catholicism as ‘modernity’s other’.⁵

At first glance, this perceived dichotomy appears to be borne out by the inner development of both confessions. Whereas Protestantism was characterised by the hegemony of a liberal interest that pressed for the ‘break-through into modernity’,⁶ the ultramontanisation of Catholicism entailed the marginalisation and even in some cases secession of pro-modern forces.⁷ In the *Syllabus errorum* of 1864, the papacy itself defined Catholicism as the antithesis of modernity. Although it would be wrong to claim that the majority of Protestants were liberal, or that Catholicism was monolithically ultramontane, the two religions seemed to have positioned themselves in pro- and anti-modern camps – even before the onset of the *Kulturkampf*.

If we turn to the level of practices and institutions it becomes clear, however, that the *Kulturkampf* was not a conflict between tradition and modernity. Despite the anti-modernity of its programme, Catholicism developed an extraordinary dynamism after 1850.⁸ The centralisation of the church apparatus, the disciplining of the clergy, the invention of confessional traditions, symbols and rituals, the revival of religious practices and the formation of an extensive, ramified, finely woven institutional and communicative network all suggest that Catholicism was embarked on a religious path to modernity.⁹

In Prussia, the focal point of the *Kulturkampf* in the German Empire,¹⁰ Catholic revival was facilitated by the constitution of 1850, which conceded far-reaching autonomy to the recognised confessions. By contrast with the Protestant churches, the Catholics proved adept at exploiting to the full

⁵ Manuel Borutta, ‘Das Andere der Moderne. Geschlecht, Sexualität und Krankheit in antikatholischen Diskursen Deutschlands und Italiens (1850–1900)’, in Werner Rammert (ed.), *Kollektive Identitäten und kulturelle Innovationen. Ethnologische, soziologische und historische Studien* (Leipzig, 2001), 59–75.

⁶ Gangolf Hübinger, *Kulturprotestantismus und Politik. Zum Verhältnis von Liberalismus und Protestantismus im wilhelminischen Deutschland* (Tübingen, 1994); Lepp, *Aufbruch*.

⁷ Otto Weiss, ‘Der Ultramontanismus. Grundlagen – Vorgeschichte – Struktur’, *Zeitschrift für bayerische Landesgeschichte* 41 (1978), 821–77; Christoph Weber, ‘Ultramontanismus als katholischer Fundamentalismus’, in Wilfried Loth (ed.), *Deutscher Katholizismus im Umbruch zur Moderne* (Stuttgart, 1991), 20–45.

⁸ Jonathan Sperber, *Popular Catholicism in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Princeton, 1984).

⁹ Irmtraud Götz von Olenhusen, *Klerus und abweichendes Verhalten. Zur Sozialgeschichte katholischer Priester im 19. Jahrhundert: Die Erzdiözese Freiburg* (Göttingen, 1994); Norbert Busch, *Katholische Frömmigkeit und Moderne. Die Sozial- und Mentalitätsgeschichte des Herz-Jesu-Kultes in Deutschland zwischen Kulturkampf und Erstem Weltkrieg* (Gütersloh, 1997).

¹⁰ For a comparative discussion of the culture wars in Baden, Bavaria, Prussia and the Empire: Ellen L. Evans, *The Cross and the Ballot: Catholic Political Parties in Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Belgium and The Netherlands, 1785–1985* (Boston, 1999), 93–122.

the opportunities created by the new system.¹¹ Among the beneficiaries were the Catholic orders: the number of monks and nuns rose from 713 in 1855 to 5,877 in 1867 to 8,795 in 1872/3.¹² A significant novelty of this era was the foundation of new Catholic congregations in Protestant areas. As a consequence of mass migrations, the nineteenth century saw the emergence of modern diasporal regions in which alien forms of faith were confronted with each other for the first time, so that confessional identity and difference acquired a new significance.¹³

The potential for conflict was heightened by the fact that processes of confessionalisation¹⁴ and of de- and re-Christianisation did not unfold in linear or synchronised fashion.¹⁵ At the time of the Catholic revival, Protestantism saw a decline in formal religious observance.¹⁶ Although the numerical relationship between the confessions remained stable in Prussia during the 1860s (almost 61 per cent Protestants to 37.4 per cent Catholics), and the position of the Protestants improved somewhat in 1866, due to the Prussian annexations,¹⁷ Protestants nevertheless perceived the florescence of the confessional rival as a threat. The expansion of Catholic congregations seemed to betoken an attempt to 'overcome' Prussia, to 'de-Protestantise' it. The evangelising missionary tours of Jesuits and Redemptorists were compared with military campaigns, the foundation of congregations with the conquest of new bastions.¹⁸ Even the less politically oriented orders that concerned themselves with pastoral duties and the care of the sick became

¹¹ Ernst R. Huber and Wolfgang Huber, *Staat und Kirche im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert. Dokumente zur Geschichte des deutschen Staatskirchenrechts*, 4 vols. (Berlin, 1973–88), II, 34–8; Jonathan Sperber, 'Competing Counterrevolutions: Prussian State and Catholic Church in Westphalia during the 1850s', *Central European History* 19 (1986), 45–62; Simon Hyde, 'Roman Catholicism and the Prussian State in the Early 1850s', *Central European History* 24 (1991), 95–121.

¹² Ronald J. Ross, *The Failure of Bismarck's Kulturkampf. Catholicism and State Power in Imperial Germany, 1871–1887* (Washington D.C., 1998), 76.

¹³ Helmut Walser Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict. Culture, Politics and Ideology 1870–1914* (Princeton, 1995), 93–6.

¹⁴ Christel Köhle-Hezinger, *Evangelisch – katholisch. Untersuchungen zu konfessionellem Vorurteil und Konflikt im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Tübingen, 1976), 94–7; Tobias Dietrich, 'Konfessionelle Gegnerschaft im Dorf (1800–1950)', in Olaf Blaschke (ed.), *Konfessionen im Konflikt. Deutschland zwischen 1800–1970: ein zweites konfessionelles Zeitalter* (Göttingen, 2002), 181–213.

¹⁵ Hartmut Lehmann (ed.), *Säkularisierung, Dechristianisierung, Rechristianisierung im neuzeitlichen Europa: Bilanz und Perspektiven der Forschung* (Göttingen, 1997); Hugh McLeod, *Secularisation in Western Europe, 1848–1914* (New York, 2000).

¹⁶ Lucian Hölscher, 'Einleitung', in Lucian Hölscher (ed.), *Datenatlas zur religiösen Geographie im protestantischen Deutschland. Von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg*, 4 vols. (Berlin, 2001), I, 1–20.

¹⁷ Gerhard Besier, *Religion, Nation, Kultur. Die Geschichte der christlichen Kirchen in den gesellschaftlichen Umbrüchen des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1992), 63.

¹⁸ Johannes B. Kießling, *Geschichte des Kulturkampfes im Deutschen Reiche*, 3 vols. (Freiburg, 1911–16), I, 301–2.

suspect. In a 'firmament of bourgeois values' whose fixed stars were reason, categorical imperative, freedom, intimacy, heterosexuality, publicity and work, there was little room for faith, casuistry, vows, the confession of sins, celibacy, monastic seclusion and contemplation.¹⁹ In the *Kulturkampf*, two distinct cosmologies separated by the portals of the cloister confronted each other as antagonists.

We turn now to an exemplary encounter of this kind. As early as August 1869, there were attacks on a Catholic orphanage run by Dominicans and Franciscans in Berlin-Moabit. It was under the shock effect of this event and of its parliamentary aftermath that Catholics founded the Centre Party in 1870.²⁰ The 'Moabiter Klostersturm' is thus rightly regarded as marking the onset of the *Kulturkampf* in the German Empire. An analysis of the episode is fruitful for several reasons. Like the *Kulturkampf*, it resulted from the clash of a plurality of partly contradictory and partly mutually reinforcing tendencies in nineteenth-century life: industrialisation, de- and re-Christianisation, confessionalisation, the rise of bourgeois society, capitalism and democracy. To a certain extent it prefigured the course and conclusion of the *Kulturkampf* itself. It demonstrates in miniature that the *Kulturkampf* was more than a political conflict between state and church or a struggle to install a monopoly over ideology²¹ – it was a confrontation between worlds of collective imagination that embraced the sphere of everyday practices.²² Since the storm on the cloisters took place before the foundation of the German Empire, it has the additional advantage that it permits us to disaggregate, as it were, the socio-confessional dimension of the conflict from the ideological and political impact of war and unification, and thereby to assess their relative importance. By focusing on the 'culture war' before the *Kulturkampf*, we also avoid the pitfalls of a teleological perspective that would see the *Kulturkampf* as the inevitable consequence of secularisation²³ or of confessionalisation.²⁴ By contrast, the aim of this chapter is to examine the *Kulturkampf* as a multi-dimensional conflict between two competing cultural imperialisms – one of them modernist

¹⁹ Manfred Hettling and Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann (eds.), *Der bürgerliche Wertehimmel. Innenansichten des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen, 2000).

²⁰ George Windell, *The Catholics and German Unity, 1866–1871* (Minneapolis, 1954), 239.

²¹ Dieter Langewiesche, *Liberalismus in Deutschland* (Frankfurt, 1988), 181.

²² David Blackbourn, *Marpingen. Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Bismarckian Germany* (Oxford, 1993).

²³ For a critique of secularisation theory, see Jonathan Sperber, 'Kirchengeschichte or the Social and Cultural History of Religion?', *Neue Politische Literatur* 43 (1998), 13–35.

²⁴ Olaf Blaschke, 'Das 19. Jahrhundert: Ein Zweites Konfessionelles Zeitalter?', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 26 (2000), 38–75, 58.

and liberal,²⁵ the other anti-modern and ultramontane.²⁶ It was a conflict that would end with the lasting subordination of Catholicism to the liberal-Protestant hegemonial culture of the German Empire. The consequences would be imprinted not only on the behaviour of Catholics and non-Catholics, but also on political culture and academic life.

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE – THE RETURN OF THE DOMINICANS TO A CATHOLIC DIASPORA CITY

When the Dominican Pater Ceslaus, Alfred Count de Robiano, a grandson of the famous convert Friedrich Leopold Count Stolberg, arrived in Berlin in March 1866, he was enthusiastic: 'A flourishing associational life, artisans' clubs, eight or nine Vincentian conferences, hospitals, Catholic schools, new chapels, all this has taken root and prospered; and behind it there stand eager determined Catholics of every rank and status whose relations with each other remind one vividly of the first Christians.'²⁷ The key figure behind this revival was the missionary vicar and church councillor Eduard Müller. Since his arrival in 1852, this Silesian, known as a 'second Boniface' and the 'apostle of Berlin' had revitalised traditional rituals, built up a local Catholic press and associational network and even facilitated the foundation of female religious communities.²⁸ Despite the concern and criticism of leading Protestants, these developments were tacitly tolerated by the Prussian authorities and even directly supported by Queen Augusta of Prussia.²⁹ Nevertheless, the limited pastoral capacities of diasporal Berlin were completely overstrained. In 1862, a total of 33,580 Catholics were served by eleven priests. Thanks to inward migration from Silesia, Posen and West Prussia, the number of Catholics in the expanding industrial metropolis had risen disproportionately: from 7,736 (1821) to 20,000 (1849) and 56,171 (1868).³⁰ In view of this unsatisfactory state of affairs, Robiano, acting on

²⁵ Páll Björnsson, 'Making the New Man. Liberal Politics and Associational Life in Leipzig, 1845–1871' (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Rochester, N.Y., 1999).

²⁶ Olaf Blaschke, 'Die Kolonialisierung der Laienwelt. Priester als Milieumanager und die Kanäle klerikaler Kuratel', in Olaf Blaschke and Frank-Michael Kuhlemann (eds.), *Religion im Kaiserreich. Milieus – Mentalitäten – Krisen* (Gütersloh, 1996), 93–135.

²⁷ Cited in Hieronymus Wilms, *Alfred Graf Robiano P. Ceslaus, der Erneuerer des Dominikanerordens in Deutschland* (Düsseldorf, 1957), 179.

²⁸ Ernst Thrasolt, *Eduard Müller. Der Berliner Missionsvikar* (Berlin, 1953); Michael Höhle, *Die Gründung des Bistums Berlin 1930* (Paderborn, 1996), 36–7.

²⁹ Meinolf Lohrum, *Die Wiederanfänge des Dominikanerordens in Deutschland nach der Säkularisation, 1856–1875* (Mainz, 1971), 138–9, 144, 156.

³⁰ Leo Jablonski, *Geschichte des fürstbischöflichen Delegaturbezirkes Brandenburg und Pommern*, 2 vols. (Breslau, 1929), I, 207–18.

the initiative of Müller and the director of the Catholic Division in the Kultusministerium, Adalbert Krätzig, suggested to the head of his order that a mission-house for the Boniface Society (Bonifatiusverein)³¹ be established in Berlin: 'There could not be a more advantageous moment [than the present] for advancing into Berlin... Silesia has more religious vocations than it can use. These young people are looking everywhere in order to dedicate themselves to the religious life. Here we would be at the point of entry.'³²

Since the Dominicans had only returned to Germany in 1860 – their convents had been closed down at the beginning of the nineteenth century – there were reservations within the order about speedy expansion, especially in the city of Berlin, the capital of Prussia. When the head of the Düsseldorf Dominican community learned of Robiano's plans, he demanded the latter's immediate return: 'The idea is fine, seductive, and flattering to our fancy, but there will be a high price to pay, as we shall learn to our detriment. At the present moment there can be no doubt about this.'³³ Despite similar reservations, the general of the order approved the foundation of a community in Berlin. After Robiano – a Belgian citizen – had returned to Berlin to perform pastoral duties among the Italian-speaking wounded of the Austrian army, he was awarded Prussian citizenship on the recommendation of the queen and offered a post at the garrison hospital.³⁴ In Moabit, an industrial working-class quarter in the north of Berlin, he saw an ideal domain for the work of the Dominicans. When the St Hedwig's Women's Association offered him the chief administrative post at the orphanage, Robiano leaped at the chance. Under the cover of working with orphans, he assured the head of his order, one could build up as large a community as one wished without fearing the effects on public opinion. The Women's Association shared this view: with work of this kind, they argued, the Dominican order could count on the neutrality of the Protestant public and the benevolence of the government; astonishment and curiosity would be set aside.³⁵

It was within this legal grey zone that the Dominicans began their mission. Two Franciscans were recruited from Aachen to educate the orphans. By summer 1869, two further Dominicans had joined them. At first, there was hardly any demand for their pastoral services. The monks lamented

³¹ On the significance of the Boniface tradition for the ultramontane diasporal mission in Germany, see Siegfried Weichlein, 'Der Apostel der Deutschen. Die konfessionspolitische Konstruktion des Bonifatius im 19. Jahrhundert', in Blaschke, *Konfessionen*, 155–79.

³² Cited in Wilms, *Robiano*, 180.

³³ Lohrum, *Wiederanfänge*, 142.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 137. ³⁵ *Ibid.*, 145–55.

the indifferent attitude of the Moabit Catholics in questions of faith, their infrequent attendance at mass and confession, and the many confessionally mixed marriages in which the children were educated as Protestants. Since Robiano planned to retrieve his 'lost sheep', they hit upon the idea of establishing a parish office of their own. Since the Dominicans lacked corporate status and were thus not entitled to acquire property, they purchased the neighbouring property through the Women's Association. There, they built a chapel that was opened on 4 August 1869 with a celebratory sermon by Eduard Müller.³⁶

On the following day, a detailed report of the ceremony appeared in the pro-governmental newspaper *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*. The report emphasised the presence of 'senior state officials, officers and citizens', and mentioned the head of the Catholic Division of the Kultusministerium, *Ministerialdirektor* Krätzig – himself a Catholic – by name.³⁷ Many newspapers erroneously assumed that church councillor Müller was a 'councillor in the Catholic Department of the ministry of Church Affairs'.³⁸ Although the conservative *Kultusminister*, Heinrich von Mühler, an opponent of the separation of church and state, denied that his ministry had played any part in the event,³⁹ he was suspected thereafter of promoting Catholicism. Mühler and his conciliatory church policy now came under increasing pressure from the Liberals.

Eduard Müller's address evoked an even stronger response. The mission vicar had described Moabit as a symbol not only of 'hedonism [and] the pursuit of material success' but also of 'a modern, steam-powered industry' which knows and pursues only earthly objectives. In order to 'slay the savage giant of unbelief', a "new Rome" was to be established here, "in Jerusalem".⁴⁰ The liberal press countered this philippic against the *Zeitgeist* with praise for the hard-working 'North German population', whose 'education and civilised outlook' found expression precisely in the 'indifference of a creative and industrious unbelief vis-à-vis the fairy-tale of idle prayer and contemplation'.⁴¹ Müller himself invoked this dichotomous portrayal of the capitalist and the Catholic ways of life in the *Märkisches Kirchenblatt*.⁴² A binary opposition that emerged from the polemical denunciations and self-justifications of liberals and ultramontanes during the

³⁶ Ibid., 155–65. In correspondence with the building authorities, this new ecclesiastical building was declared an extension of the orphanage. See Kurt Wernicke, 'Der "Moabiter Klostersturm"', *Berlinische Monatsschrift* 3 (1994), 6–14, 7.

³⁷ *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 5 August 1869. ³⁸ *Berliner St. Bonifacius-Kalender* (1883), 31.

³⁹ *National-Zeitung*, 28 August 1869. ⁴⁰ *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 5 August 1869.

⁴¹ *Volks-Zeitung*, 11 August 1869. ⁴² *Märkisches Kirchenblatt*, 28 August 1869.

Kulturkampf became by the turn of the century a core element of the confessionalist paradigm and one of the axioms of secularisation theory.⁴³ But the Müller speech was also interpreted within the context of a confessionalism that legitimated itself in historical terms. With the onset of the 'second age of confessionalisation' as one historian has called it,⁴⁴ the Reformation, the Counter-Reformation and the Thirty Years War became virtual battlefields for a confessional struggle over national history that was only resolved in favour of the Protestants with the foundation of a small-German empire.⁴⁵ Against this background, the appearance of a Dominican establishment in the 'metropolis of Protestantism' could be seen as the sign of a second Counter-Reformation. The liberal press was thus unsettled by the 'confidence in victory' with which 'the Romelings anticipate the eventual return of the Protestant city to the Roman yoke'.⁴⁶ Whereas Müller was cited as stating that the supportive attitude of the authorities revealed a 'Prussian trait' in the tradition of Frederick the Great,⁴⁷ the liberal newspaper celebrated the revolt against Luther's rival Johannes Tetzel – a 'degenerate [*entarteten*] Dominican' and an 'envoy of the Roman Church' – as the 'greatest and most moral act of the German people'.⁴⁸ Müller was astonished at the impact of his address. That the press had taken note of it at all was somewhat suspicious and suggested that an intrigue was afoot.⁴⁹ Notwithstanding Müller's later denial of certain passages and the publication of a supposedly 'authentic' version of the address,⁵⁰ the Moabit foundation – and with it all Catholic orders and monasteries – was henceforth at the centre of public attention.

CONVENT STORIES – THE UBRYK AFFAIR AND THE FOUNDATIONS OF CIVIL SOCIETY

The opening of the Dominican chapel happened to coincide with a European cloister scandal.⁵¹ Only a week before, the liberal press had reported on a 'dreadful crime' that had allegedly taken place in Cracow. The local convent of the Carmelites had been searched by the authorities after an

⁴³ Martin Baumeister, *Parität und katholische Inferiorität. Untersuchungen zur Stellung des Katholizismus im Deutschen Kaiserreich* (Paderborn, 1987), 101–5.

⁴⁴ Blaschke, 'Das 19. Jahrhundert'. ⁴⁵ Smith, *Nationalism*, 27–33, 61–68.

⁴⁶ *Vossische Zeitung*, 6 August 1869. ⁴⁷ *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 5 August 1869.

⁴⁸ *National-Zeitung*, 8 August 1869. ⁴⁹ *Berliner Bonifacius-Kalender* (1871), 89.

⁵⁰ *Märkisches Kirchenblatt*, 21 August 1869.

⁵¹ Michael B. Gross, 'The Strange Case of the Nun in the Dungeon, or German Liberalism as a Convent Atrocity Story', *German Studies Review* 23/1 (2000), 69–84. On European reactions to the Ubryk affair, see *National-Zeitung*, 10 August 1869 (Belgium) und *Il Libero Pensiero*, 5, 12 and 19 August 1869 (Italy).

anonymous denunciation to the effect that a nun had been held 'buried alive' for twenty-one years within its walls. Despite efforts by the nuns to thwart the search, 'a dark pestilential hole that served as a latrine' was found to contain 'a naked, barbarised, half-insane female', 'a fearful creature such as even Dante in the fullness of his imaginative powers could not draw'.⁵² Asked why she had been imprisoned, the woman replied 'I broke my vow of chastity, but these ones here [indicating the nuns] are not pure either, they are not angels either.' She described the father confessor as a 'beast'.⁵³ A judicial inquiry revealed that the woman in question was Barbara Ubryk, born in Warsaw in 1817. She had been accepted into the Cracow convent at the age of twenty-two. Since 1848, she had shown 'symptoms of a mental illness' that was described by a doctor as 'erotomania'.⁵⁴ When she had run amok, become violent and torn her clothes, she had been locked into a cell. In order to prevent her from presenting herself naked at the window and accosting passers-by, her window had been partially bricked in.⁵⁵

The liberal press transformed the case into a 'typical' cloister story. A once-pretty girl had gone into the convent because her parents had forbidden her to marry a young student. In order to return to her beloved, she had attempted to escape in 1848 and, when this failed, had gone mad from despair. Attempts by the family to contact her had been forbidden by the nuns. After her confinement, it was claimed, Barbara Ubryk had also suffered physical mistreatment.⁵⁶

The Ubryk affair focused public attention on a phenomenon that until then had gone largely unremarked: namely, the feminisation of religion, by which Catholicism was especially affected. The profession of nun was chosen by ever more women in the nineteenth century as a form of life beyond the bourgeois institutions of marriage and family.⁵⁷ In Prussia, the number of Catholic women's communities rose from 125 (1853) to 736 (1869), to 851 (1874).⁵⁸ The number of the members rose from 559 (1855) to 2,883 (1861) and 8,011 (1872/3).⁵⁹ In choosing to live the life of a nun, a woman withdrew herself not only from the male-controlled spheres of family and marriage, but also from her ascribed tasks of reproduction and education.

⁵² *National-Zeitung*, 27 July 1869. ⁵³ *Volks-Zeitung*, 27 July 1869.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 1 August 1869. ⁵⁵ *Germania*, 31 May 1871.

⁵⁶ *National-Zeitung*, 31 July 1869; *Vossische Zeitung*, 31 July 1869; *Volks-Zeitung*, 5 August 1869.

⁵⁷ Irmtraud Götz von Olenhusen (ed.), *Frauen unter dem Patriarchat der Kirchen. Katholikinnen und Protestantinnen im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart 1995); Irmtraud Götz von Olenhusen (ed.), *Wunderbare Erscheinungen. Frauen und katholische Frömmigkeit im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Paderborn, 1995).

⁵⁸ Ross, *Failure*, 76–7.

⁵⁹ Relinde Meiwes, 'Arbeiterinnen des Herrn'. *Katholische Frauenkongregationen im 19. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt, 2000), 77.

This alternative female mode of life came in for sharp criticism in the 'cloister novel', a widely used medium of culture war that represented the nun as the helpless victim of her sex and of a male-dominated institution which exploited her economically and sexually. The career of a nun culminated in mindlessness, emotional coldness, or even in sexual perversion and madness. The protagonist could only be 'rescued' by a representative of the patriarchal order, or by death. By constructing a linkage between the conventual life, deviant sexuality and religious madness, the cloister novel made a significant contribution to a moral and epistemological critique of Catholicism that had been formulated by enlightened critics of religion and had acquired a certain institutional authority with the formation of the scientific disciplines in the nineteenth century.⁶⁰

As 'proof that the Cracow convent scandal is nothing new', the liberal press cited numerous titles in this genre.⁶¹ Classics from the eras of the Enlightenment and pre-March were reissued in new editions. But there was also a flood of new products on the market, to the point where one newspaper editor had to bar 'cloister-story-writers' categorically from his editorial department.⁶² Commenting on the facile sensationalism of such stories, the satirical journal *Kladderadatsch* recommended that one could always wall up another nun if real news were in short supply.⁶³ The production of such literature was driven in part by commercial interests, and its entertainment value should not be underestimated. Nevertheless, the intentions behind it were serious enough. Various scholarly devices, such as a citation apparatus and lists of primary and secondary sources, were employed to persuade the reader of the veracity of the narrative.⁶⁴

This fiction was rendered more plausible by daily horror reports from the convents of Europe: the suicides of pregnant nuns, underground passages between male and female convents, the grisly discovery of the skeletons of walled-up nuns in Prague, Lvov, Spain, Posen, West Prussia and Upper Lusatia – the more remote the location, the more horrific the acts seemed to be.⁶⁵ The Dominican establishment in Düsseldorf was also shaken by a scandal that became known throughout Europe.⁶⁶ After one Father had been forced to leave, following the discovery of a sexual liaison, the convent was surrounded by police on 6 August 1869, after an accusation concerning offences with underage girls. Despite a police man-hunt, the suspected Father was able to escape.⁶⁷

⁶⁰ Borutta, 'Das Andere der Moderne', 64–8.

⁶² *Märkisches Kirchenblatt*, 16 October 1869.

⁶⁴ Borutta, 'Das Andere der Moderne', 65–8.

⁶⁶ *Il Libero Pensiero*, 2 September 1869; Lohrum, *Wiederanfänge*, 205.

⁶⁷ Lohrum, *Wiederanfänge*, 71–2, 215.

⁶¹ *Kladderadatsch*, 15 August 1869.

⁶³ *Kladderadatsch*, 8 August 1869.

⁶⁵ *Volks-Zeitung*, 6 August 1869.

In the light of such revelations, the Ubryk affair did not appear as an exception, but rather as the rule.⁶⁸ If the authorities failed to pursue the allegations, then they were accused of complicity with the clergy. If investigations ended with an acquittal, then this was simply passed over in silence, as in the Ubryk case,⁶⁹ or simply interpreted as evidence of the clergy's skill in covering its tracks. The efforts of the Catholic press to counter this sort of reporting⁷⁰ could not prevent the orders and the cloisters from becoming the privileged objects of collective fantasies of violence and sexual licence. They no longer appeared as the useless, risible relics of a bygone era, but rather as the germ cells of an evil that had to be defeated in the interest of the progress of civilisation. Even the educational work of the cloister came under hostile scrutiny.⁷¹

In Cracow, the Ubryk affair triggered several days of rioting against the foundations of the Carmelites, the Jesuits and the Franciscans; only after military intervention could the rioting be stopped.⁷² On 31 July 1869, the German Journalists' Congress in Vienna urged the Austrian government to close down all convents, to expel the Jesuits and to suspend the Concordat with Rome. The Prussian legislature was also urged to do its duty, on the grounds that the re-establishment of convents constituted a disturbance of the religious peace. The monk and his way of life belonged to a 'long-past' era, which was 'no longer intelligible to us'. Vows and the conventual life stood in opposition to 'the spirit of our time, the spirit of freedom and industriousness' and were dedicated solely to the propagation of ultramontanist and the extension of papal dominion.⁷³

COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE – ANTI-CATHOLIC MEDIA AND THE MOABIT KLOSTERSTURM

The link was immediately made between Berlin Catholicism and the latest scandals.⁷⁴ The Ubryk affair was disseminated via every medium of the urban public sphere: theatres and organ grinders helped to propagate street ballads. The 'most shameless poems and ditties' encouraged spectacular displays of anti-Catholicism. When an 'insolent boy' in the house of a freemason began to sing 'smutty songs against the cloister' and to hawk cheap copies of 'the most shameless narrative coupled with an indecent image of the Nun of Cracow', the result was a spontaneous anti-Catholic

⁶⁸ *Volks-Zeitung*, 30 July 1869. ⁶⁹ *Märkisches Kirchenblatt*, 27 November 1869.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 2 October 1869. ⁷¹ Lohrum, *Wiederanfänge*, 189–90.

⁷² *National Zeitung*, 26 and 27 July 1869; *Vossische Zeitung*, 27, 29 and 30 July 1869.

⁷³ Cited in *Berliner St. Bonifacius-Kalender* (1883), 33. ⁷⁴ *Märkisches Kirchenblatt*, 14 August 1869.



Figure 5 Procession of Austrian monks on their way to Moabit, from the satirical journal *Kladderadatsch*, 15 August 1869.

performance.⁷⁵ Local liberal associations conjured up the danger of a return of the Inquisition through the Moabit Dominicans.⁷⁶ Rumours of incarcerated boys, forced baptisms, the odour of corpses and subterranean passages from the Dominicans to the Ursulines spread like a bush-fire across the city.⁷⁷ Collective fantasies were aroused by popular verses and caricatures. Under the title 'A Country Outing from Austria', the satirical journal *Kladderadatsch* of 15 August 1869 depicted a procession of Austrian monks to Moabit, armed with inquisitional instruments of torture and alcohol, one of them cavorting, another in intimate embrace with a nun, who carries the mortar to be used for her own incarceration (figure 5).⁷⁸ The *Berliner Wespen*, another illustrated satirical paper, visualised a 'future vision of Berlin' with the caption 'Anno Dominicano', which depicted shameless monks with helpless women, nuns flagellating and prostituting themselves, forced conversions, pogroms against Jews and the public burning of heretics (figure 6).

⁷⁵ *Berliner St. Bonifacius-Kalender* (1871), 86. ⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 83–4.

⁷⁷ *Berliner Wespen*, 15 August 1869. ⁷⁸ *Kladderadatsch*, 15 August 1869.

Berliner Wespen.

Die Zukunfts-Ansicht von Berlin.



Verlag von V. Brigl in Berlin, Krausenstraße 41. — Druck von H. Wenig & Glöner in Berlin, Kommandantenstraße 7.

Figure 6 A 'vision of Berlin's future' from the satirical paper *Berliner Wespen*, 15 August 1869.

To this was added the 'bad dream of a Dominican in Moabit', who is seen cowering under the hefty blows of a Moabit worker.⁷⁹

The interest of the Berliners had been aroused. Inquisitive spectators besieged the cloister day and night. After false press reports that the cloister had been stormed by a crowd, the numbers swelled even further.⁸⁰ A Catholic teacher who lived in the house of the Dominicans complained: 'The massive profusion of often very distorted newspaper reports on the Moabit church attract hundreds of people... They all want to know about the underground passages, the nuns, the secrets of the convent... We estimate the number of spectators last Sunday at between ten and twelve thousand.' The crowd did not confine itself to voyeurism: 'The excesses of the uninvited guests, these underage disciples of Gambrinus have unfortunately become so bad, what with their profane speech, their indecent behaviour, with burning cigars and hats worn in the church, that it was thought necessary to close not only the church, but also the other entrances of the building to the public after the services.'⁸¹

The most serious tumult occurred on 16 August 1869. Crowds had converged on the Moabiter Festwiese, a favoured destination for weekend excursions, in order to observe a high-wire cyclist whose performance had been widely advertised in the district. At the same time, the liberal Berliner Arbeiterverein had announced a meeting on the question of the church and religion.⁸² When the 'aerial velocipedist' failed to show up, there was a call to storm the cloister. 'There was much cursing of the monks, and in the matter of a moment the entire crowd had poured across the Turmstraße towards the cloister building'.⁸³ 'Horrific masses of people' – between 3,000 and 10,000 – surged 'in never-ending legions armed with cudgels, poles and other equipment' towards the Dominican establishment. The constable succeeded in holding back the crowd until dusk. 'But now', a police commissioner recalled, 'the mood became ever more dangerous. First the street lanterns were smashed with cobble stones and broken off at the base, fences were torn down to gain new material, and together with the other officers, I

⁷⁹ *Berliner Wespen*, 15 August 1869. In 1869 the liberal satirical journals of Berlin published seventeen caricatures on the convent question. This total exceeds the number of representations satirising the dogma of infallibility (eleven). Friedhelm Jürgensmeier, *Die katholische Kirche im Spiegel der Karikatur der deutschen satirischen Tendenzzeitschriften von 1848 bis 1900* (Trier, 1969), 261–2.

⁸⁰ P. Augustinus Keller, 'Gründung von Düsseldorf und von Berlin, Geschichte Berlins und Gründung des Collegium Albertinum, Trans Cedron in Venlo, Marienspalter (bis 1880)', Ms., in Archiv Konvent St. Paulus, Berlin, 20; *Märkisches Kirchenblatt*, 14 August 1869.

⁸¹ *Volks-Zeitung*, 17 August 1869. Gambrinus refers to a legendary Flemish king who is alleged to have been the inventor of beer and is known as the patron of brewers. I am grateful to Christopher Clark for bringing this to my attention.

⁸² *Vossische Zeitung*, 18 August 1869. ⁸³ Keller, *Gründung*, 20–1.

was subjected to a veritable hail of stones, poles and pieces of wood.⁸⁴ Disguised in secular clothes, the Patres fled with the orphans. After a withdrawal by the police, the crowd tore the fence down, forced its way into the courtyard, demolished windows and doors and could only be pushed back by a mounted policeman.⁸⁵ The seventeen persons who were arrested – workers, craftsmen's apprentices and a pupil from the *Gymnasium*⁸⁶ – stated that they had been looking for the fugitive Father from Düsseldorf.

When a crowd of hundreds gathered before the cloister once again on the following evening, the police reacted with brutal efficiency to the first thrown stones. There were twenty-four arrests and seven individuals were admitted with wounds to the Charité hospital.⁸⁷ Since the siege did not let up over the following days, the police continued to guard the cloister for several months. The Dominicans nonetheless remained the target of symbolic attacks. In the Berlin Panoptikum, a mid-nineteenth-century counterpart to Madame Tussaud's, a suite of wax figures was displayed that served as proxies for those who wished to abuse the Fathers. Moreover, there was no halt to intrusions into the church by 'strangers, mostly Protestants', who came to look about the church and to observe people taking confession. Youths gathered in front of the cloister in the evening to make 'rough music' (*Katzenmusik*).⁸⁸ The re-activation of this popular form of protest, which had traditionally been directed against women accused of transgressing sexual taboos,⁸⁹ is a reminder of how central the association with sexual deviancy remained to the critique of the conventual life.

The open demonstration of this alternative way of life was perceived as a provocation. It was said in the 'salons of Berlin officialdom' that the publicly visible clothing of the Dominicans bestowed upon the 'metropolis of Protestantism' the appearance of a Catholic city.⁹⁰ When it became known that the Fathers intended to participate in a Corpus Christi procession, there were efforts to prevent it.⁹¹ In the immediate aftermath of the attack, the general of the Dominicans had forbidden the brothers to wear the habit of the order when leaving the cloister. They should never again wear their habit publicly in Berlin.⁹² In other words, even before the onset of the *Kulturkampf* proper, one important liberal objective, namely the exclusion of religious symbols from public space, had been achieved – at

⁸⁴ Report by Police Commissioner Lück to P. Robiano, Archiv Konvent St. Paulus, Berlin.

⁸⁵ Keller, *Gründung*, 23. ⁸⁶ *Volks-Zeitung*, 18 August 1869.

⁸⁷ Kurt Wernicke, 'Der "Moabiter Klostersturm"', *Berlinische Monatsschrift* 3 (1994), 6–14, 10.

⁸⁸ Keller, *Gründung*, 25–30.

⁸⁹ Jonathan Sperber, *Rhineland Radicals: The Democratic Movement and the Revolution of 1848–1849* (Princeton, 1991), 86–7.

⁹⁰ *Berliner St. Bonifacius-Kalender* (1871), 83–4.

⁹¹ Keller, *Gründung*, 29–30. ⁹² Lohrum, *Wiederanfänge*, 176–9.

least partially. But this was not enough to allay confessional passions. In spite of everything, Father Keller recalled, 'people recognised us as Moabit monks and often threatened us in all kinds of ways. Sometimes we were told: you too will soon be hanging from the lantern; sometimes stones were thrown at us. Protestant girls coming out of their schools stood and spat before us.'⁹³

While contemporaries had no difficulties explaining such acts of symbolic violence, the *Klostersturm* itself, with its extensive physical violence, posed a more serious challenge to their hermeneutic capabilities. A range of different interpretations was offered. Representing the authorities, the Berlin magistracy ascribed the events to the mentality of the Berlin population, which responded with instinctive rage to any form of religious compulsion.⁹⁴ The liberal press also depicted the events as a spontaneous act of the rabble, which – disappointed by the non-appearance of the high-wire cyclist – had taken out its frustration on the cloister.⁹⁵ One newspaper distanced itself from the violence, but spoke sympathetically of the 'distaste of the Protestant population of working Berlin for the establishment of places dedicated solely to contemplative inactivity'.⁹⁶ For Eduard Müller, this had obviously been a traumatic experience, and he responded to it with ever more complex and encompassing interpretations. The ring-leaders, as he saw it, were 'grey-bearded', 'finely-dressed gentlemen', who had roused and even paid the crowd in the taverns and had given 'the sign' to attack the cloister.⁹⁷ Although the ultramontane camp was slow to respond in kind to the pictorial offensive of the liberals and produced only a very meagre flow of caricatures of their own,⁹⁸ they did nonetheless have a clear image of the enemy. If the leading opponents of cloisters were finely dressed, then this merely manifested the social dimension of the culture war – poor Catholics here, rich elites there. Beardedness and the frequenting of taverns stood for liberal views, bourgeois sociability and a norm of masculinity that was diametrically opposed to the Tridentine priestly ideal.⁹⁹ Surprisingly, the rage of the mission vicar was not directed against the confessional rival. By contrast with the Dominicans, Müller stressed the solidarity of local Protestants with the beleaguered Catholics. In his view the tumult had been the work above all of 'foreigners', freemasons and Jews. Although we should not assume that Müller's extreme antisemitism¹⁰⁰ was typical of Catholics in general, it points nonetheless to a more general tendency. In the context of the late nineteenth-century revival of conspiracy theories,

⁹³ Keller, *Gründung*, 28. ⁹⁴ *National-Zeitung*, 24 August 1869.

⁹⁵ *Vossische Zeitung*, 18 August 1869. ⁹⁶ *Volks-Zeitung*, 19 August 1869.

⁹⁷ *Märkisches Kirchenblatt*, 21 August 1869; Keller, *Gründung*, 19–21.

⁹⁸ Jürgensmeier, *Kirche*, 56–7. ⁹⁹ Götz von Olenhusen, *Klerus*, 181–206.

¹⁰⁰ *Märkisches Kirchenblatt*, 21 August 1869; *Berliner St. Bonifacius-Kalender* (1871), (1883), *passim*.

both sides engaged in the partly dialogical, partly reciprocal construction of an invisible, all-powerful, international and hostile other.¹⁰¹

The sources do not permit us to determine the extent to which the *Klostersturm* was planned in advance.¹⁰² However, there was nothing coincidental or spontaneous about the selection of the Moabit cloister as a target. Perhaps the most differentiated contemporary account stems from an outsider, Pater Rouard de Card, the French prior of the cloister. For Rouard, it was the 'publicity surrounding the consecration of the chapel, the scandal of Düsseldorf, and above all the agitation which had prompted the tumult'.¹⁰³ The attack was the result of a process of emotional escalation against an antagonist seen as embodying deviant political, confessional, sexual and moral values. It had been brought about by a European scandal, an ultramontane provocation, a political intrigue, a publicity campaign, and the collective adoption of anti-Catholic stereotypes in popular media and ritual (rumour, humour, songs, rough music). If we conceptualise it in terms of a topographical model of power, the impulse for the attack did not come from above (from the state), but from the midst of society (from the liberals), while the physical violence came from below (from workers). Although the boundaries between personal religiosity and secular morality were fluid,¹⁰⁴ what was at stake for the cloister-stormers was above all the definition of a good and proper life. Their motivations were moral rather than politico-confessional in nature.

DEMOCRATIC DISCIPLINE – THE 'SUBJECTIVATION'¹⁰⁵ OF POLITICAL CATHOLICISM

After the attack on the cloister, the conflict acquired an official politico-legal dimension. On 24 August 1869, the police president informed the

¹⁰¹ Helmut Walser Smith, 'The Learned and Popular Discourse of Anti-Semitism in the Catholic Milieu of the Kaiserreich', *Central European History* 27 (1994), 315–28; Olaf Blaschke, *Katholizismus und Antisemitismus im Deutschen Kaiserreich* (Göttingen, 1997); Michael B. Gross, 'Anti-Catholicism, Liberalism and German National Identity, 1848–1880' (Ph.D. dissertation, Brown University, Providence, R. I., 1997); Róisín Healy, 'The Jesuit as Enemy: Anti-Jesuitism and the Protestant Bourgeoisie of Imperial Germany, 1890–1917' (Ph.D. dissertation, Georgetown University, Washington D.C., 1999); Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, *Die Politik der Geselligkeit. Freimaurerlogen in der deutschen Bürgergesellschaft, 1840–1918* (Göttingen, 2000).

¹⁰² Keller, *Gründung*, 28.

¹⁰³ Cited in Lohrum, *Wiederanfänge*, 170; on Rouard, see *ibid.*, 73, note 136.

¹⁰⁴ Holscher, 'Einleitung', 6.

¹⁰⁵ This neologism is used by Judith Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power. Theories in Subjection* (Stanford, 1997), 83, drawing on Foucault, to denote 'both the becoming of the subject and the process of subjection – one inhabits the figure of autonomy only by becoming subjected to a power, a subjection which implies a radical dependency'. This was the situation in which German Catholicism found itself when it – in response to a political threat – constituted itself as a political subject in the form of the Centre Party, but thereby subjected itself to the liberal discourse.

Dominicans that, in view of the hostile atmosphere, the safety of the institution and its personnel could no longer be guaranteed. Invoking a royal decree of 1810 that had defined the cloisters as state properties subject to confiscation,¹⁰⁶ he questioned the settlement rights of the order, initiated a parliamentary investigation and urged the Dominicans to leave the city.¹⁰⁷ The Dominicans assumed there would be further attacks. The prior wrote to the general of the order:

We know that people close to the King are doing everything they can in order to bring about the closure of our church. We also know that the Kultusminister and the Minister of the Interior . . . are in fear of the challenges levelled at them on our account in the chambers of parliament. At the same time we receive the most unsettling letters informing us that our house will be set on fire, that our church will be blown up and so on. After what we have seen of the tone here in the first days, nothing is impossible. And yet the police talk of wanting to abandon us. But the church councillor, Müller, has already offered to see to the formation of a guard troop recruited from Catholics to protect the cloister.¹⁰⁸

On 29 August 1869, the Liberal Berliner Arbeiterverein, which had been established in 1852 by Hermann Schulze-Delitzsch, co-founder of the Nationalverein and of the German Progressive Party, convened a popular meeting. Speaking before an audience of 2,000, the head of the local joiners' association, Waldow, described the convents as 'breeding grounds for superstition, idiocy, stupidity and crime. Unless a concerted campaign were mounted against them, the reputation of German civilisation would be no more than a wisp of grey fog over a trodden-down German Fatherland fertilised with blood.' The aim was 'to struggle for a free, united, happy Fatherland, and to move forward with the whole society (Deafening cheers)'. When the legal executor for the property of the Moabit cloister and later co-founder of the Centre Faction, Friedrich von Kehler, pointed out that the monks led blameless lives and that one could see 'no evidence of idleness within, that four Fathers were responsible for raising, teaching and caring for 41 orphans', tumults broke out on the floor and the speaker was obliged to leave the platform. After the Catholics had left the hall, the meeting passed a resolution, calling for the dissolution of monasteries in Prussia, which closely resembled that of the German Journalists' Congress.¹⁰⁹

By the time the next mass meeting took place on 12 September 1869, the Catholics had mobilised their numerous members in artisans' and masters' associations and now enjoyed a majority. When they elected a member

¹⁰⁶ Huber and Huber, *Staat*, I, 58. ¹⁰⁷ Lohrum, *Wiederanfänge*, 172.

¹⁰⁸ Cited in *ibid.*, 173. ¹⁰⁹ *National-Zeitung*, 30 August 1869.

of the Bonifatiusverein as chairman, there were further tumults and the meeting had to be closed, even before it had been possible to discuss the planned petition to the Prussian parliament calling for the dissolution of cloisters.¹¹⁰ The impossible had happened: in Berlin, the bastion of the Liberals,¹¹¹ the 'Catholic party – for we must now describe the supporters of Church Councillor Müller as a party in their own right' had succeeded in sabotaging a mass meeting.¹¹² This was all the more disturbing to the Liberals for the fact that they did not perceive the Catholics as autonomous subjects, but rather as mere instruments operating under the remote control of ultramontane leaders. Word soon got around of Müller's servants (*Knechte*).¹¹³ The 'influence' of the clergy on the ill-educated, helpless and easily aroused and seduced Catholic masses became one of the standard Liberal arguments against the introduction of a democratic franchise.¹¹⁴

In the matter of the cloister, they chose to follow legal procedures and sent eleven petitions calling for the dissolution of the cloisters to the Prussian Chamber of Deputies. Since most of the 826 establishments known to the Ministry of Church Affairs did not possess rights of corporation, there was debate within the Petitions Committee over whether these were 'private' associations, or monastic establishments requiring state approval. Whereas the government favoured the former view, the majority of the committee, led by the Liberal jurist Rudolf von Gneist, one of the architects of the later *Kulturkampf* legislation, saw these institutions as 'organised corporations' controlled from abroad and bound by oaths to their superiors. The 'public' purpose of the Jesuit Order and of other denominations, they argued, was the struggle against Protestantism. On 17 December 1869, the committee recommended that the government make the fullest use of prosecutions, the right to withhold concessions and powers of supervision. All private educational institutions, orphanages and hospitals were to be either prohibited or watched.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 13 September 1869.

¹¹¹ Toni Offermann, 'Preußischer Liberalismus zwischen Revolution und Reichsgründung im regionalen Vergleich. Berliner und Kölner Fortschrittsliberalismus in der Konfliktzeit', in Dieter Langewiesche (ed.), *Liberalismus im 19. Jahrhundert. Deutschland im europäischen Vergleich* (Göttingen, 1988), 109–35.

¹¹² *Vossische Zeitung*, 14 September 1869. ¹¹³ *Märkisches Kirchenblatt*, 9 October 1869.

¹¹⁴ Margaret L. Anderson, *Practicing Democracy. Elections and Political Culture in Imperial Germany* (Princeton, 2000), 69–151.

¹¹⁵ 'Fünfter Bericht der Kommission für Petitionen, betreffend die Aufhebung der Klöster in Preußen', in *Preußischer Landtag. Haus der Abgeordneten. 1869/70. Stenographische Berichte. Anlagen*, II, 990–1007. On these juridical aspects, see Erwin Gatz, *Kirche und Krankenpflege im 19. Jahrhundert. Katholische Bewegung und karitativer Aufbruch in dem preussischen Provinzen Rheinland und Westfalen* (Munich, 1971), 44, 575–8.

The Catholics responded swiftly with eighty counter-petitions pleading for the preservation of their corporations. The Liberals had reason to fear further damage to their standing in parliament, but Bismarck, whose policy was focused at this time on national conciliation, came to their aid. On 2 February 1870, in a session of the Ministerial Council, the Prussian minister-president had invoked Frederick the Great's principle of religious toleration and had warned against undermining the trust of Prussian Catholics. Members of a repressed church, he observed, could easily be fanaticised.¹¹⁶ The Prussian administration should avoid any scandals that might jeopardise the attachment of the predominantly Catholic German south to the North German Confederation. On 8 and 9 February 1870, in sessions of the Prussian Chamber of Deputies, Bismarck's allies, the Free Conservatives, urged the house – in the name of national unity and of confessional peace – to abstain from a discussion of the report from the Petitions Committee. Despite protests from Catholic deputies, the National Liberal president of the parliament, Max von Forckenbeck, scheduled the report so late in the proceedings that it could no longer be dealt with. The Catholics were thus prevented from picking up the liberal Protestant gauntlet; indeed they were effectively 'silenced'.¹¹⁷

It was against the background of this experience, of intensified anti-Catholicism in general and of the successful Catholic mobilisations in Baden and Bavaria, that the Centre Party constituted itself in December 1870.¹¹⁸ Already in 1869, Eduard Müller had called for the reactivation of the Catholic electors' movement and the parliamentary fraction formed in 1852 in response to the decrees of the Prussian minister of church affairs, Karl von Raumer.¹¹⁹ The establishment of an independent political formation, Müller argued, provided the key to understanding how 'otherwise insignificant parties could come to great influence, whereas the Ultramontanes always drew the short straw despite all their superiority in other respects... Our subordinate position [*Helotenstellung*] can be ascribed to this failure to achieve independence in all municipal and state elections.'¹²⁰ In Müller's view, the relationship between Liberals and Catholics was essentially colonial in character. By contrast, Catholic politicians, many of whom were well-to-do burghers or nobleman, tended to see themselves as

¹¹⁶ Karl Bachem, *Vorgeschichte, Geschichte und Politik der deutschen Zentrumsparlei*, 9 vols. (Cologne, 1927–32), III, 41.

¹¹⁷ *Preussischer Landtag. Haus der Abgeordneten 1869/70. Stenographische Berichte*, 2009, 2010, 2039, 2010.

¹¹⁸ Bachem, *Vorgeschichte*, III, 43–7. On political Catholicism in Baden and Bavaria, see Evans, *Cross*, 95–108.

¹¹⁹ Bachem, *Vorgeschichte*, II, 96–111. ¹²⁰ *Märkisches Kirchenblatt*, 27 November 1869.

autonomous subjects and emphatically not as subalterns. They wanted to give the party a *political* character. In the context of contemporary political assumptions, this meant a *non*-confessional character. They thus adopted the title 'Verfassungspartei' ('Constitutional Party') as the subsidiary name for the party. By contrast with the Netherlands, Switzerland, Baden and Austria, political Catholicism in Prussia and in the German Empire chose not to characterise itself as 'Catholic' or 'Christian'.¹²¹ On a symbolic level, it thus anticipated the separation of public and private, of politics and religion that the Liberals held so dear. The political representatives of the Catholics were already integrated in the ideological universe of the Liberals. In this sense, it was neither paradoxical nor opportunistic that the Centre Party figured in the *Kulturkampf* as the advocate of liberal basic rights. As a party within the Empire, however, it continued to be marked with the 'stigma' of confessionalism.¹²²

INTENTIONS, LIMITS AND EFFECTS – THE *KULTURKAMPF* AS A FAILURE?

On 18 June 1880, Karl Strosser, a German-Conservative member of the Prussian Landtag described the storming of the Moabit cloister and its parliamentary afterlife as the 'egg from which the *Kulturkampf* later developed'.¹²³ This local episode did indeed prefigure in miniature many of the key features of the later national conflict: Protestant fears of re-Catholicisation, the competition between ultramontane and enlightened-liberal missionary and educational programmes, the ambivalent – sometimes transconfessional, sometimes anti-Catholic – attitude of the state, an aggressive anti-Catholicism among Liberals and Protestants, the exclusion of specific forms of religiosity from public space and the mobilisation, politicisation and ghettoisation of the Catholics.

Nevertheless, the outbreak of the *Kulturkampf* in Prussia as a state-driven enterprise would not have been possible without the foundation of the Empire. In this sense, the Prussian experience was quite distinct from that in Bavaria and Baden. The relative weights of the Christian confessions in the Empire (61.6 per cent Protestants to 36.7 per cent Catholics) and the conflicting orientations of the hegemonial tendencies within them

¹²¹ Kißling, *Geschichte*, III, 336; Margaret L. Anderson, *Windthorst. A Political Biography* (Oxford, 1981), 133–9; Evans, *Cross*, 109–10.

¹²² Margaret L. Anderson, 'Interdenominationalism, Clericalism, Pluralism: The *Zentrumsstreit* and the Dilemma of Catholicism in Imperial Germany', *Central European History* 21 (1988), 350–78.

¹²³ *Preussischer Landtag. Haus der Abgeordneten 1879/80. Stenographische Berichte*, III, 2181.

(ultramontanism on the one hand and 'cultural Protestantism' on the other) were of course important factors, but it was above all the intersection of these conflicts with the foundation of the nation-state that accounts for the relative severity and vitality of the German *Kulturkampf*. In view of the threatening capacity of Catholicism to mobilise masses for politics and religion, an anti-Catholic consensus had established itself among Liberals and Protestants by the beginning of the Liberal era (1866–78). This consensus provided the basis for the *Kulturkampf* proper. With the Prussian victory over Austria in 1866, anti-Catholicism also acquired a power-political perspective. It was expected that the minority status now imposed upon the Catholics within the new small-German nation-state would facilitate the homogenisation of national culture. Following the territorial unification of 1871, the *Kulturkampf* appeared the logical next step in the nation-building process.¹²⁴ Yet the objectives of the exponents of *Kulturkampf* varied; indeed they were in some respects contradictory. Whereas conservative Protestants expected that the completion of a 'Holy Protestant Empire of the German Nation'¹²⁵ would also entail a revival of their church and religion, the Liberals looked to the separation of church and state, the exclusion of religion from public space and the dissemination of *Bildung*, that bourgeois-secular *Ersatzreligion* in which mystical-pietist assumptions about the individual blended with the pedagogy of the Protestant Enlightenment.¹²⁶ Since the liberals understood the state to be an agent of modernisation, they did not – with the exception of a few left-Liberals – see the application of state coercion as irreconcilable with liberal principles.¹²⁷ For Reich Chancellor Bismarck, the chief priorities were the Germanisation of ethnic-confessional minorities and the campaign against federalist-secessionist tendencies in Bavaria, Schleswig-Holstein, Alsace-Lorraine, Hanover, Upper Silesia and Prussian Poland.¹²⁸ In the Centre Party, which sometimes cooperated with these groups, he saw the incarnation of anti-national and democratic centrifugal forces.¹²⁹

¹²⁴ Langewiesche, *Liberalismus*, 104–5, 180–7; Otto Pflanze, *Bismarck and the Development of Germany*, vol. II: *The Period of Consolidation, 1871–1880* (Princeton, 1990), 180; Smith, *Nationalism*, 19–37; Lepp, *Aufbruch*, 294–333.

¹²⁵ Stoecker to Brockhaus, 27 January 1871, cited in Walter Frank, *Hofprediger Adolf Stoecker und die christlich-soziale Bewegung* (Hamburg, 1935), 27–8.

¹²⁶ Georg Bollenbeck, *Bildung und Kultur. Glanz und Elend eines deutschen Deutungsmusters* (Frankfurt, 1994), 103–9, 216–21.

¹²⁷ David Blackburn, 'Progress and Piety: Liberalism, Catholicism and the State in Imperial Germany', *History Workshop* 26 (1988), 57–78; Smith, *Nationalism*, 37–41.

¹²⁸ Lech Trzeciakowski, *The Kulturkampf in Prussian Poland* (New York, 1990).

¹²⁹ Heinrich Bornkamm, 'Die Staatsidee im Kulturkampf', *Historische Zeitschrift* 170 (1950), 41–72; 273–306; Anderson, *Windthorst*, 144–5; Evans, *Cross*, 112–15.

The impulse for an escalation of the conflict came from Rome. The declaration of the dogma of papal infallibility at the Vatican Council of 1870, initially rejected by the majority of German bishops, was seen in Germany not only as a declaration of war on modernity, but also as a challenge to dynasty and nation. Although the comportment of Catholics in the German Wars of Unification had been no less 'national' than that of the Protestants, and although ultramontanisation and national mobilisation were no more mutually exclusive than loyalty to Kaiser and pope, the Catholics were branded with the stigma of national unreliability.¹³⁰ The dissolution of the Catholic Department within the Ministry of Church Affairs in 1871 and the replacement of the conservative minister for church affairs Mühler by the liberal Adalbert von Falk in 1872 thus signalled the onset of a confessional homogenisation of the state apparatus.¹³¹

The legislative phase of the *Kulturkampf* began in 1871 with the 'Pulpit Law'. This made it illegal for priests to 'treat state matters in a manner that threatens the public peace'. The Prussian School Inspection Law of 1872 extended state supervision over schooling. Catholic school inspectors were forced to leave office. Some 1,000 members of orders were obliged to leave the school service. The resistance of the Polish clergy to Germanisation policies thereby lost its institutional basis.¹³² The 'Jesuit Law' of 1872 forbade foundations of the Societas Jesu in the Reich, established procedures for the expulsion of foreign Jesuits and imposed limits on the residential rights of their German colleagues.¹³³ In the following year, this provision was extended to cover the supposedly related orders of the Redemptorists, the Lazarists, Priests of the Holy Spirit and the Sacred Heart of Jesus.¹³⁴ The 'May Laws' stipulated that German citizenship was a precondition for the appointment to clerical office; clerical appointments would henceforth depend upon an 'academic pre-training' which was to be acquired in a German institution and to be tested through a state examination, the so-called '*Kulturexamen*'. Bishops were obliged to report all appointments

¹³⁰ Barbara Stambolis, 'Nationalisierung trotz Ultramontanisierung oder: "Alles für Deutschland. Deutschland aber für Christus". Mentalitätsleitende Wertorientierung deutscher Katholiken im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert', *Historische Zeitschrift* 269 (1999), 57–97.

¹³¹ Margaret L. Anderson and Kenneth Barkin, 'The Myth of the Puttkamer Purge and the Reality of the Kulturkampf', *Journal of Modern History* 54 (1982), 647–86.

¹³² Marjorie Lamberti, *State, Society and the Elementary School in Imperial Germany* (New York, 1989).

¹³³ Michael B. Gross, 'Kulturkampf and Unification: German Liberalism and the War Against the Jesuits', *Central European History* 30 (1997), 545–66; Róisín Healy, 'Religion and Civil Society: Catholics, Jesuits, and Protestants in Imperial Germany', in Frank Trentmann (ed.), *Paradoxes of Civil Society: New Perspectives on Modern German and British History* (New York, 2000), 244–62.

¹³⁴ Otto Weiss, 'Die deutschen Redemptoristen während des deutschen Kulturkampfes (1871–1893)', *Rottenburger Jahrbuch für Kirchengeschichte* 15 (1996), 127–47.

to clerical offices to the local authorities. The 'Expatriation Law' made it possible to expel undesirable clergymen and to nullify their citizenship status. The Civil Registration Laws established the primacy of the state over the chief ceremonial rites of passage (birth, marriage, death). In 1875, under the 'Bread-Basket Law' (*Brotkorbgesetz*) state payments to the church were ended. The Law Concerning Orders and Congregation authorised the dissolution of all foundations on Prussian territory.¹³⁵

The church reacted in confrontational fashion. In 1872, Pius IX called upon German Catholics to resist the 'persecution of the church'. In Mainz, a Verein der deutschen Katholiken was founded to coordinate opposition to state measures. Together with the Centre Party, the episcopate criticised the *Kulturkampf* laws as in breach of the constitution, a point that was later implicitly conceded by the modification (1873) and removal altogether (1875) of the religious articles of the Prussian constitution. The bishops forbade Catholics to implicate themselves in any way in the carrying out of the new laws. In 1875, Pius IX declared the Prussian church legislation to be invalid and threatened all those who participated in its enforcement with excommunication.¹³⁶

The most vigorous state action was directed against the resistance of the clergy in Prussia. In the first four months of 1875 alone, 241 priests, 136 editors and 210 laymen were sentenced to fines or periods of detention, 20 newspapers were confiscated, 74 houses were searched, 103 persons were expelled or interned, and 55 associations or clubs were dissolved.¹³⁷ In all, eight bishops were arrested or expelled during the *Kulturkampf* in Prussia – in 1878 only three out of twelve were still in office. The pastoral care of the Catholics suffered. In 1881, a quarter of all Prussian parishes were unoccupied; in the diocese of Trier, more than quarter of the clergy were in exile.¹³⁸ Catholics saw this unprecedented repression as a campaign to transform the state by legislative means into a 'tutelary dictatorship'.¹³⁹ They reacted with strategies of active and passive resistance that ranged from declarations of solidarity and financial help for dismissed, arrested or fugitive clergy, to petitions, the boycott of national celebrations, participation in forbidden rituals and symbolic or physical violence.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁵ Huber, *Staat*, II, 395–764.

¹³⁶ Rudolf Morsey, 'Kulturkampf', in Anton Rauscher (ed.), *Der soziale und politische Katholizismus. Entwicklungslinien in Deutschland 1803–1963* (Munich, 1981), 80–9.

¹³⁷ Bachem, *Vorgeschichte*, III, 303–4. On measures against the Catholic press, see Ross, *Failure*, 158–79.

¹³⁸ Christoph Weber, *Kirchliche Politik zwischen Rom, Berlin und Trier 1876–1888. Die Beilegung des preußischen Kulturkampfes* (Mainz, 1970), 61.

¹³⁹ Kurt Nowak, *Geschichte des Christentums in Deutschland. Religion, Politik und Gesellschaft vom Ende der Aufklärung bis zur Mitte des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Munich, 1995), 155.

¹⁴⁰ Sperber, *Catholicism*, 207–52; Ross, *Failure*, 121–57.

To the great surprise of its exponents, the *Kulturkampf* merely strengthened the bond between clergy and lay people. It intensified the confessionalisation, ultramontanisation and the politicisation of Catholics, whose infrastructure now began to thicken into a relatively homogeneous milieu.¹⁴¹ It was above all the Centre Party that profited from these developments: in the Reichstag elections of 1874, they succeeded in capturing 77 per cent of the Catholic votes;¹⁴² in 1878, they achieved electoral parity with the National Liberals; in 1881 and 1884, the Centre was the strongest party.¹⁴³ Moreover the Old-Catholic movement, which rejected the doctrine of infallibility, failed to unleash a 'second Reformation'.¹⁴⁴ Despite formal state recognition, it remained confined to a relatively narrow constituency drawn from the educated bourgeois elites.¹⁴⁵ Most middle-class Catholics managed to straddle the gap between the secular liberal-Protestant hegemonial culture and the Catholic subculture.¹⁴⁶

The campaign against the church was hindered by divergences among the exponents of *Kulturkampf*. Within Protestantism, the limits of the anti-Catholic consensus were soon laid bare: whereas Liberal Protestants campaigned against 'Catholics' of both confessions (a group which, in their view, included orthodox Protestants), conservative Protestants and the Protestant church were gradually alienated by the transconfessional anticlerical aspects of the *Kulturkampf*.¹⁴⁷ The character of the state itself also set limits to the *Kulturkampf*. The German Empire was an authoritarian, but not a totalitarian state. Traditions of respect for law, the need to comply with legal procedures and bureaucratic inertia rendered state coercion ineffective. Neither the judiciary nor the executive was up to the task of meeting the challenge of Catholic resistance. The policing resources required to survey, monitor and prosecute all Catholic offences were simply not available. At local level, especially in Catholic districts, many officials abstained from implementing *Kulturkampf* regulations.¹⁴⁸ Moreover, the personnel and

¹⁴¹ Olaf Blaschke and Frank-Michael Kuhlemann, 'Religion in Geschichte und Gesellschaft. Sozialhistorische Perspektiven für die vergleichende Erforschung religiöser Mentalitäten und Milieus', in Blaschke and Kuhlemann, *Religion*, 7–56.

¹⁴² Anderson, *Democracy*, 102.

¹⁴³ Gerd Hohorst et al., *Sozialgeschichtliches Arbeitsbuch*, vol. II: *Materialien zur Statistik des Kaiserreichs 1870–1914* (Munich, 1978), 173–4.

¹⁴⁴ Ferdinand Gregorovius, *Römische Tagebücher 1852–1889*, ed. Hanno-Walter Kruft and Markus Völkel (Munich, 1991), 271.

¹⁴⁵ Sperber, *Catholicism*, 233–40; Ross, *Failure*, 35–52.

¹⁴⁶ Thomas Mergel, 'Ultramontanism, Liberalism, Moderation: Political Mentalities and Political Behaviour of the German Catholic Bürgertum, 1848–1914', *Central European History* 29 (1996), 151–74; a more detailed treatment of these themes can be found in Thomas Mergel, *Zwischen Klasse und Konfession. Katholisches Bürgertum im Rheinland 1794–1914* (Göttingen, 1994), 253–307.

¹⁴⁷ Ross, *Failure*, 15–34. ¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 95–120.

financial means required to replace Catholic institutions were often lacking. In particular, the female orders that dedicated themselves to caring for the sick had made themselves virtually indispensable. They were exempted from the various legal prohibitions, remained largely shielded from state repression and were indeed able in some places to extend their activities during the *Kulturkampf*.¹⁴⁹

At the 'macro-level' of church-state relations, the *Kulturkampf* accelerated a process of institutional differentiation that escaped the notice of most contemporaries: while the state laid claim to primacy in the 'masculine' sphere of politics and public life, the church withdrew, at least provisionally, into domains like the care of the sick whose connotation was predominantly female. What resulted was not a separation, but the crystallisation of a complementary-hierarchical co-existence of state and church analogous to the 'gendered spheres' of public life and private domain.¹⁵⁰ Moreover, anti-socialism was a bond that connected state and churches, liberals, conservatives and Catholics. It is no accident that the beginning of the end of the state-driven *Kulturkampf* in 1878/9 coincided with the anti-socialist law. The 'scoundrels without a Fatherland' ('*Vaterlandslose Gesellen*')¹⁵¹ were replaced by the 'Romelings without a Fatherland' (*Vaterlandslose Römlinge*) as the primary 'enemies of the Reich'.¹⁵²

The official end of the *Kulturkampf* as a state-driven enterprise came with the 'Peace Laws' (1886/7) that largely normalised the relationship between the Prussian state and the Catholic church, but this by no means implied that the societal culture war was over. As a consequence of the confession-alisation that had occurred in the course of the *Kulturkampf*, two mass organisations now appeared – the anti-ultramontane Evangelischer Bund zur Wahrung der deutsch-Protestantischen Interessen (1886) and the anti-socialist and anti-liberal Volksverein für das Katholische Deutschland (1890). It was thanks in part to such organisations that the political culture of Wilhelmine Germany continued to be structured by confessional antagonisms.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁹ Meiwes, *Arbeiterinnen*, 298–301.

¹⁵⁰ Borutta, 'Das Andere der Moderne', 68–70.

¹⁵¹ Dieter Groh and Peter Brandt, '*Vaterlandslose Gesellen*'. *Sozialdemokratie und Nation 1860–1990* (Munich, 1992).

¹⁵² *National-Zeitung*, 21 October 1876.

¹⁵³ Gangolf Hübinger, 'Confessionalism', in Roger Chickering (ed.), *Imperial Germany. A Historical Companion* (London, 1996), 156–84; Gotthard Klein, *Der Volksverein für das katholische Deutschland 1890–1933. Geschichte, Bedeutung, Untergang* (Paderborn, 1996); Armin Müller-Dreier, *Konfession und Politik, Gesellschaft und Kultur des Kaiserreichs. Der Evangelische Bund 1886–1914* (Gütersloh, 1998).

If we measure the *Kulturkampf* against the intentions of its exponents, then there is no doubt that it failed. Despite all Bismarck's best efforts, the Centre did not disappear from the German party landscape, but rather established itself as a crucial power factor. In spite of Protestant and Liberal hopes, there was no homogenisation of national culture in the sense of confessional unity or secularisation; on the contrary, there was a deepening of confessional oppositions. An asymmetrical relationship developed between a Liberal-Protestant hegemonial culture and an ultramontane Catholic sub-culture. Within the triangular relationship among Liberals, ultramontanes and Catholics, the latter were subject to a twofold process of colonisation. It was the Liberals who dominated public life at national level, to an extent even within the Catholic elites,¹⁵⁴ whereas it was the ultramontanes who controlled the Catholic milieu. The hegemony of these two cultural imperialisms was mutually reinforcing. The long-term consequences would only be overcome in West Germany after the Second World War, and even then only through the emergence of a Christian-Conservative party.¹⁵⁵

In the social and cultural sciences, the *Kulturkampf* had an even longer afterlife. Sociology 'objectivised' the confessionalist paradigm, transforming it into a scientific premiss.¹⁵⁶ The recruitment and research practices of academic history helped to conceal this epistemological anti-Catholicism under a veneer of objectivity. The foundation of the Empire and the *Kulturkampf* perpetuated the exclusion of Catholic historians from the academic profession¹⁵⁷ and the exclusion of Catholicism from 'history'. Religion in general and Catholicism in particular appeared as mere obstacles on the road to modernity, the *Kulturkampf* merely as a necessary attempt to overcome them. In the 1960s, this paradigm of modernisation, with its cultural-Protestant roots, acquired a Marxist colouring, without however renouncing its anti-Catholic foundations.¹⁵⁸

The 'hot' phase, in which it was impossible to write the history of the *Kulturkampf* without at the same time waging culture war, now appears

¹⁵⁴ Reformist Catholic intellectuals adopted the supposedly universal, secular-liberal, Protestant-dominated national culture of the early German Empire as a yardstick for their own confession and propagated concepts such as the 'educational deficit' (*Bildungsdefizit*) and the 'intellectual inferiority' (*geistige Inferiorität*) of the Catholics; these were in turn understood by the Protestant public as confirming anti-Catholic prejudices. Cf. Baumeister, *Parität*, 50–94.

¹⁵⁵ Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte*, vol. III: *Von der 'Deutschen Doppelrevolution' bis zum Beginn des Ersten Weltkrieges, 1849–1914* (Munich, 1995), 902.

¹⁵⁶ Baumeister, *Parität*, 95–105.

¹⁵⁷ Wolfgang Weber, *Priester der Clio. Historisch-sozialwissenschaftliche Studien zur Herkunft und Karriere deutscher Historiker und zur Geschichte der Geschichtswissenschaft 1800–1970* (Frankfurt, 1984).

¹⁵⁸ Raymond C. Sun, *Before the Enemy is Within our Walls: Catholic Workers in Cologne, 1885–1912, a Social, Cultural, and Political History* (Boston, 1999), 1–2.

to be over. With the decline of modernisation theories since the 1980s, apparently paradoxical, long-observed phenomena like the modernity of anti-modern ultramontanist or the anti-Catholic fundamentalism of the Liberals, have become intelligible. Religion is no longer seen as the residue of tradition, but as a powerful historical force within modernity. With this shift in perspectives, there is reason to hope that the 'confessional blindness'¹⁵⁹ of German academic history will at last be overcome. The end of the secularisation paradigm may have been announced, but there is still a tendency to conceptualise religion in the modern era using categories such as privatisation and individualisation and thereby to separate it from the political, the public and the collective. The secularist definition of modernity forged in the culture wars remains influential. Simply to replace the paradigm 'secularisation' with that of 'confessionalisation' therefore brings the danger of amnesia and repression (*Verdrängung*). A more successful way of overcoming the hegemony of secularisation theory in the longer term might well be to begin by taking it seriously as a still-influential self-characterisation of the modern era and to turn – in genealogical fashion – to the historical location of its emergence: the culture wars.

¹⁵⁹ Dieter Langewiesche, 'Nation, Nationalismus, Nationalstaat: Forschungsstand und Forschungsperspektiven', *Neue Politische Literatur* 40 (1995), 216.

CHAPTER 10

*Village quarrels and national controversies: Switzerland**

Heidi Bossard-Borner

It is among the peculiarities of Swiss history in the nineteenth century that the struggle to establish a national state that was progressive and democratic by contemporary standards was bound up with various conflicts over religious policy. Within the protracted history of these conflicts, in which elements of a culture war can be discerned throughout,¹ there is a period which is known more specifically as the *Kulturkampf*. It began with the First Vatican Council and was officially brought to an end around the middle of the 1880s. This *Kulturkampf* is the central concern of this chapter. Running parallel to the German *Kulturkampf*, it was an integral part of that fundamental confrontation between liberalism and ultramontane Catholicism that was waged in the second half of the nineteenth century in numerous European states. However, this was at the same time a conflict with genuinely Swiss roots, which was marked by the specific historic, political and confessional circumstances of the Swiss Confederation. Before we chart the course of the conflict, it therefore seems appropriate to point out those factors that lent the *Kulturkampf* in this part of Europe its specifically Swiss character.

TYPICALLY SWISS

We begin with the federal structure of Switzerland. The twenty-two cantons enjoyed a considerable degree of autonomy. Religious and cultural policy in particular remained within the responsibility of the cantons, even after the transition from a confederacy of states to a constitutionally unified federal state in 1848. The active role of the federal authorities in the *Kulturkampf* therefore confined itself to two areas. Firstly, the government, or Federal Council (*Bundesrat*) and the two chambers of parliament, the National

* Translation from the German by Christopher Clark.

¹ Urs Altermatt, *Katholizismus und Moderne. Zur Sozial- und Mentalitätsgeschichte der Schweizer Katholiken im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Zurich, 1989), 224–5.

Council (*Nationalrat*) and the Council of States (*Ständerat*) were together responsible for ensuring that the stipulations of the federal constitution were observed. Secondly, the Federal Council, as the organ of foreign policy, was responsible for diplomatic relations with the Holy See. The federal state was also drawn into the *Kulturkampf* when exponents of Catholic anticlericalism in union with Protestant anti-papalists tried to achieve their objectives by means of federal legislation valid for the whole of Switzerland. There were thus certain phases in which the *Kulturkampf* became an all-Swiss affair. For the most part, however, the conflicts were played out in the individual cantons. But not all cantons were affected to the same degree, for the *Kulturkampf* took on extremely different forms and dimensions, depending on the political and confessional structures of the individual cantons.

In 1870, the population of Switzerland was approximately 59 per cent Protestant and 40 per cent Catholic.² The two denominations were not, however, evenly distributed across the country. Each canton had its own distinctive religious landscape. There were Catholic, Protestant and denominationally mixed cantons. The historically inherited religious identity of the individual cantons was not seriously questioned until late in the nineteenth century. This was particularly the case for the rural Catholic areas. Economically more backward than the Protestant regions, they were relatively late to experience industrialisation and were therefore less affected by the consequences of heightened mobility and urbanisation. The traditionally Protestant cantons of Berne and Geneva were a special case: new areas with Catholic populations had been allocated to them in 1815–16. The problems of integration meant that the *Kulturkampf* took a particularly pronounced form in both of these cantons. However, this fact should not mislead us into interpreting the *Kulturkampf* primarily as an inter-denominational confrontation. The key variable that determined whether serious conflict broke out in a specific canton was not the denominational divide between Protestants and Catholics, but rather the ideological divide between conservatism and liberalism or radicalism.

The antagonism between *Freisinn* (free thought) – the German-Swiss rubric for the various manifestations of liberalism – and the conservatives was one of the enduring features of the political life of nineteenth-century Switzerland. While liberal-radical forces dominated in the federal state, the conservatives set the tone in a number of cantons. Both sides were

² *Historische Statistik der Schweiz* (Zurich, 1996), 153–4; maps in Altermatt, *Katholizismus*.

only rudimentarily organised as political parties.³ This openness left room for diverse interpretations of the respective party doctrines. The constellations of the conservative right defined themselves first and foremost in terms of their cantonal allegiance and by denomination. Things were more complicated on the liberal-radical side. From the 1830s, when the radicals split from the legalistic *juste milieu* of the liberal mainstream,⁴ the liberal camp encompassed a spectrum that included the entire span of the political middle and the left. The centre of gravity was on the radical wing, and this was also where the activists of the *Kulturkampf* could be found. By contrast, moderate liberals enjoyed a relatively strong presence within the seven-man Federal Council. This was especially the case for the years of the *Kulturkampf*. Notwithstanding changes of personnel and the radical inclinations of individual members, the Federal Council as a collegial entity pursued a moderate line.

The party-political antagonism was ostensibly co-extensive with the denominational divide: Protestants were liberal or radical, Catholics were conservative. In reality, things were considerably more complex. In both confessional camps there were political minorities. Of particular importance in connection with conflicts over church policy was the minority of the radical Catholics, who as citizens identified with the liberal cause and as Catholics opposed the growing influence of the ultramontanes within the church.⁵ After the First Vatican Council, a number of these radical Catholics separated themselves irreversibly from the Catholic church and found a new religious home in Christian-Catholicism (*Christkatholizismus*), a Swiss variant of Old Catholicism. The numerical weight of the radical Catholics varied from canton to canton. In Solothurn, they constituted the strongest political force. In Ticino and in Lucerne, they dominated cantonal politics into the 1870s. In the other Catholic cantons, they were comparatively marginalised. In the Old Cantons (*Urkantone*), even very cautious concessions to liberalism were viewed as unacceptable.⁶ In the denominationally mixed cantons and at federal level, the radical Catholics had the opportunity to realise their objectives, thanks to support from the

³ Erich Gruner, *Die Parteien in der Schweiz. Geschichte, neue Forschungsergebnisse, aktuelle Probleme* (Berne, 1977), 73–125.

⁴ Alfred Kölz, *Neuere schweizerische Verfassungsgeschichte. Ihre Grundlinien vom Ende der Alten Eidgenossenschaft bis 1848* (Berne, 1992), 268–89.

⁵ Victor Conzemius, 'Der Kulturkampf in der Schweiz – Sonderfall oder Paradigma?', *Rottenburger Jahrbuch für Kirchengeschichte* 15 (1996), 27–42.

⁶ Cf. Josef Lang, 'Der Unterwaldner Konflikt zwischen dem "neuen Bruder Klaus im Bundesfrack" und dem ultramontanen Klerus', in Alexandra Binnenkade and Aram Mattioli (eds.), *Die Innerschweiz im frühen Bundesstaat (1848–1874). Gesellschaftsgeschichtliche Annäherungen* (Zurich, 1999), 77–108.

Protestant majority. For them, therefore, a 'free church in a free state' could never be a feasible option. On the contrary, they had a vital interest in maximising state control of the church, and particularly in extending the powers of the federal government in the spheres of religious and cultural policy.

The debate between federalism and centralism had for decades been an important theme in the politico-confessional conflict. The conservatives, who saw in cantonal sovereignty a bulwark against undesirable forms of modernisation, had stubbornly resisted the centralising initiatives of the liberals since 1831; only through the military defeat of the Catholic conservative cantons in the *Sonderbund* War did the establishment of the federal state of 1848 become possible. A second phase of centralisation was launched in 1874 under the auspices of the *Kulturkampf* – once again in the face of resistance from the conservative Catholics.

At federal level, the liberals and radicals of both denominations enjoyed a comfortable majority. If the majority did not always have its way, this was above all a consequence of the fact that political and linguistic-cultural interests occasionally neutralised each other. It was not only the conservatives and the Catholics who constituted a minority within the federal state, but also the members of the French- and Italian-speaking communities. These linguistic regions were, for the most part, radical in a party-political sense, but they were much more sceptical towards centralising initiatives than the German-Swiss radicals. Just like the conservative Catholics after 1848, they saw the retention of cantonal autonomy as the best protection against domination by the majority. A shared federalist interest could therefore furnish the basis for alliances of convenience between Catholic conservatives and French- and Italian-speaking radicals. If this oppositional constellation also succeeded in mobilising the conservative elements within German-Swiss Protestantism, then it could pose a threat to the radical majority.

When we speak of political parties and governmental majorities, it must be emphasised that politics in later nineteenth-century Switzerland was not confined to party circles and government committees. At all levels of state organisation – in communities, cantons and in the federal state – the citizens regularly elected their political representatives. The democratic movement of the 1860s had also led to the extension of structures of direct democracy: in many cantons, and from 1874 also in the federal state, the citizenry possessed the means to influence the political process directly, inasmuch as they had the right to approve or to reject the laws which their political representatives had prepared. To this extent, the *Kulturkampf* was

subject to a kind of democratic control, a state of affairs that over time was to have a moderating effect on the course of the conflict. The lowest level of democratic co-determination was the community (*Gemeinde*). In many cantons, the right of citizens to elect not only their political and administrative officials, but also their teachers and church administrators was a central aspect of communal autonomy. A notable peculiarity in this connection was the election of pastors by 'church members' (*Kirchgenossen*). In the solidly Catholic areas of Central Switzerland, the communal election of pastors was an ancient custom.⁷ In some cantons, however, it was only introduced on the eve of or during the *Kulturkampf*.⁸ Radical politicians hoped through this democratisation to undermine the influence of the hierarchy and to encourage the election of liberally minded clergymen. In the short term, the popular election of parish priests did indeed have this effect. In the long term, however, it tended in most cases to benefit the Catholic church authorities.

We have already touched on a further peculiarity of the Swiss *Kulturkampf*: it stood within a longer tradition of culture-war antagonisms. When, after 1870, the radicals set themselves the objective of subjecting the Catholic church to strict state controls, pruning back the growing power of the papal curia, they were taking up an old and well-tried formula. The following discussion cannot, therefore, concern itself solely with the period 1870–85. An earlier point of departure is essential.

EVENTS AND SETTINGS⁹

Conflicts between church and state had already occurred during the eighteenth century, during the Catholic Enlightenment.¹⁰ But the foundation of the Helvetic Republic in 1798 marked the advent of a new era. It dissolved the traditional unity between church and state. For a decade after the end of the Helvetic period, the dominant figure in substantial parts of German-speaking Switzerland was the episcopal vicar-general of Constance, Ignaz Heinrich von Wessenberg. His reformist initiatives were supported by a

⁷ Eduard Schweizer, 'Das Gemeindepatronat in den Urkantonen', *Zeitschrift für schweizerisches Recht*, new series 24 (1905), 1–80.

⁸ Peter Stadler, *Der Kulturkampf in der Schweiz. Eidgenossenschaft und katholische Kirche im europäischen Umfeld 1848–1888* (Zurich, 1996), 283–4; Ulrich Lampert, *Kirche und Staat in der Schweiz*, 3 vols. (Fribourg and Leipzig, 1929–39), III, 212–28.

⁹ For a comprehensive account and overview, see Stadler, *Kulturkampf*. The following notes provide references to important monographs and new literature.

¹⁰ On the canton of Lucerne, cf. Hans Wicki, *Staat, Kirche, Religiosität. Der Kanton Luzern zwischen barocker Tradition und Aufklärung* (Lucerne and Stuttgart, 1990), 13–151.

number of individual cantonal governments, but they were energetically opposed by the nuncio, the conservative governments of the Old Cantons and by the conservative-minded part of the clergy.¹¹ The restoration that took hold in Switzerland after the fall of Napoleon brought an abrupt end to the Wessenberg era. But neither in the ecclesiastical nor in the political sphere did the restoration entail a return to the conditions of the *ancien régime*. In fact, throughout the whole of Switzerland diocesan organisation had to be radically overhauled especially in view of the dissolution of the Constance bishopric. On this occasion, the demarcation of the spheres of interest of church and state proved an extremely contentious theme. When the bishopric of Basel was finally reconstructed as the largest Swiss diocese in 1828 after years of negotiations, the governments of the cantons comprised in it came together to form the so-called Diocesan Conference and demanded extensive rights of consultation and control.¹²

In 1831, liberals regrouped in several cantons to become the dominant political force. Inspired by the new political mood, a liberal faction also formed within the Catholic clergy. For a short period, this group was remarkably active. The collaboration between political and ecclesiastical liberals generated a synthesis in which – on the basis of the traditional state–church principle – centralising national aspirations blended with church reform.¹³ These thoroughly disparate policy options were welded into a political programme at the Baden Conference of January 1834, in which government representatives from seven Catholic and confessionally mixed cantons participated. The ominous ‘Articles of the Conference of Baden’ aimed to subject the Catholic church in Switzerland to rigorous state controls, while at the same time increasing its independence vis-à-vis the Roman curia. But the liberal vision that informed the articles proved short-lived. In view of the vigorous opposition of the Catholic church – Pope Gregory XVI explicitly

¹¹ Franz Xaver Bischof, ‘Der Konstanzer Generalvikar Ignaz Heinrich von Wessenberg im Spiegel der Berichte des Luzerner Nuntius Fabrizio Scerberras Testaferatta (1803–1816)’, in Manfred Weitlauff (ed.), *Katholische Kirche und Theologie in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart, 1990), 197–224; Heidi Bossard-Borner, *Im Bann der Revolution. Der Kanton Luzern 1798–1831/50* (Lucerne and Stuttgart, 1998), 233–60.

¹² Markus Ries, *Die Neuorganisation des Bistums Basel am Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts (1815–1828)* (Stuttgart, Berlin and Cologne, 1992). On the Diocesan Conference, see Bernhard Ehrenzeller, *Die Diözesankonferenz des Bistums Basel* (Fribourg, 1985). On the Swiss bishoprics more generally, see *Helvetia sacra* (Berne, Basel and Frankfurt a.M., 1972), 1/1–6.

¹³ Conzemius, ‘Kulturkampf’, 31–5; Josef Lang, ‘“Die Firma der zeitverständigen Geistlichen stirbt aus”. Die Ultramontanisierung des Schweizer Klerus im langen Kulturkampf von 1830–1880’, *traverse. Zeitschrift für Geschichte* 3 (2000), 78–89.

condemned the articles in 1835¹⁴ – and of the disquiet that spread within the Catholic population, there could be no thought of putting the reformist elements of the programme into practice. The cantonal governments that had taken part were ultimately obliged either to content themselves with reinforcing certain isolated elements of the traditional state–church system, such as the right of *placet*, or simply to put the articles as a whole on ice. Internal measures of church discipline ensured that the liberal clergy were silenced. At the same time, liberal and radical politicians of Catholic faith lost influence, because the majority of Catholic citizens, put off by these seemingly protestantising radical initiatives, distanced themselves from liberalism.

The character of liberal-radical church policy changed after the mid-1830s. The reformist dynamic was displaced by more repressive tendencies. As early as 1835/6, the cantons of Aargau and Berne reacted with military measures when parts of the Catholic population resisted the introduction of the Articles of the Conference of Baden. This was followed, early in 1841, by the dissolution of the Aargau monasteries. This measure, enacted by the Aargau parliament at the urging of the Catholic radical Augustin Keller, was intended as retribution for the recalcitrance of the Catholic-conservative sector of the canton, which had resisted the abolition of various privileges. Since the dissolution of the monasteries was in breach of federal law, it became a political issue for the Confederation as a whole. The dispute over whether this act should be tolerated or not deepened the chasm that had divided liberal and conservative cantons since 1831. The antagonism was further intensified when the canton of Lucerne, in which a religiously inspired democratic-conservative popular movement had driven out the liberal government in 1841, decided to hand over its theological school to the Jesuit order. Augustin Keller took the issue to the federal level and demanded a nation-wide prohibition of the Jesuits. He thereby triggered a campaign which, drawing on every conceivable cliché and calumny, took on aspects of mass hysteria. Under the banner of ‘war against the Jesuits’, the radicals succeeded in mobilising all those who were not unequivocally Catholic and conservative behind their central political objectives. Jesuit-baiting became a vehicle for expediting the restructuring of the Swiss Confederation. The Catholic conservative cantons, for their part, joined together to form a separate alliance, known as the *Sonderbund*. Years of

¹⁴ *Commissum divinitus*, 17 May 1835; for the German translation, see *Kreisschreiben unseres heiligen Vaters Papsts Gregorius XVI., an die Bischöfe, Kapitel, Pfarrer und die übrige Geistlichkeit in der Schweiz* (Schwyz, 1835); an excerpt in Latin and German can be found in Lampert, *Kirche*, III, 106–8.

confrontation, in which ideological, denominational, church-political and constitutional questions intertwined, culminated in the *Sonderbund* War of 1847. Ending in the military victory of the liberal-radical majority, this civil war paved the way for the establishment of the federal state of 1848.¹⁵

Although the federal state owed its origin not least to anti-Catholic emotions, it remained free of serious conflicts over church policy after 1848. There were cases, to be sure, in which federal law impinged upon church rights. This applied, for example, to the prohibition of the Jesuit order or the laws concerning the authorisation and separation of denominationally mixed marriages.¹⁶ The most serious breach of the church's autonomy occurred in 1859, when the federal authorities unilaterally separated the canton of Ticino from the bishoprics of Como and Milan, thereby suspending all foreign episcopal jurisdiction on Swiss soil. In doing so, they supported the church policy of the radical Ticino government, which in the 1850s displayed some of the features of a culture war.¹⁷

In other words, the potential for conflict remained after 1848, but its effects were confined to specific regions or issues and did not seriously endanger relations between church and state. If observant Catholics in the federal state sometimes had reason to feel themselves second-class citizens, this had less to do with the state's sporadic interventions in church affairs than with the manner in which liberals and radicals generally handled the Catholic-conservative minority.¹⁸ The commitment to conservative Catholicism carried the taint of national unreliability. The conservative Catholics were initially equated with the party of the *Sonderbund*, over which the new federal entity had prevailed in the civil war. In the course of the 1850s, the distinction between victors and vanquished gradually lost some of its importance. However, developments within the universal Catholic church ensured that the attitude of Roman Catholics to the Swiss

¹⁵ On the *Sonderbund*, see Carlo Moos, 'Dimensionen eines Bürgerkriegs. Für eine Neubewertung des Geschehens um den Sonderbund', in Brigitte Studer (ed.), *Etappen des Bundesstaates. Staats- und Nationsbildung der Schweiz 1848–1998* (Zurich, 1998), 21–44. On the background to the foundation of the federal state, cf. Andreas Ernst, Albert Tanner and Matthias Weishaupt (eds.), *Revolution und Innovation. Die konfliktreiche Entstehung des schweizerischen Bundesstaates von 1848* (Zurich, 1998); Thomas Hildbrand and Albert Tanner (eds.), *Im Zeichen der Revolution. Der Weg zum schweizerischen Bundesstaat 1798–1848* (Zurich, 1997).

¹⁶ Heidi Borner, *Zwischen Sonderbund und Kulturkampf. Zur Lage der Besiegten im Bundesstaat von 1848* (Lucerne and Stuttgart, 1981), 48–50, 132–3.

¹⁷ Fabrizio Panzera, 'Dello Stato sagrestano alla libertà della Chiesa (1848–1890)', in Raffaello Ceschi (ed.), *Storia del Cantone Ticino*, 2 vols. (Bellinzona, 1998), I, 263–96; Antonietta Moretti, *La chiesa nell'Ottocento. La questione diocesana 1803–1884* (Locarno, 1985).

¹⁸ Cf. Borner, *Sonderbund*; Marco Jorio, 'Zwischen Rückzug und Integration – die Katholisch-Konservativen und der junge Bundesstaat', in Studer, *Etappen*, 89–108.

nation remained a topical issue. The increasing orientation of the church towards Rome and the papacy placed the Catholics in a difficult position, all the more so in a liberal-democratic state like Switzerland. The publication of the *Syllabus errorum* proved to every progressive mind the contradiction between the claim of conservative Catholics to participate in the democratic process and their religious and ideological commitment to a church sovereign who condemned every achievement of liberal democracy. By the same token, conflicts could arise between Catholic-conservative politicians whose actions were motivated by issues of state policy and those circles which defined their Catholic identity entirely in terms of papal authority. The most prominent representative of the first group was the Lucerne national councillor (*Nationalrat*) and legal historian, Philipp Anton von Segesser, while the Piusverein, founded in 1857, articulated the concerns of the more stringently Rome-oriented circles. If Segesser characterised Theodor Scherer-Boccard, the president of the Piusverein as a 'Catholic commis-voyageur',¹⁹ he was not only venting his own irritations; he was also touching upon an important aspect of an organisation that defined itself as unpolitical but whose highly visible and audible reverence towards Pius IX represented both a political statement and a provocation. As 'the hinge between clergy and political class', the Piusverein also made a crucial contribution to the ultramontane disciplining of Swiss Catholicism. It was thus partly responsible for the fact that Swiss Catholics – clergy and laypeople alike – committed themselves ever more exclusively to a 'traditional-confessionalist counter-modernity'.²⁰

The second half of the 1860s saw a rise in church-political tensions, especially in the bishopric of Basel. There was a dramatic deterioration in the climate of relations between Bishop Eugène Lachat and the radical cantons. In 1867, the canton of Berne ordered a drastic reduction in religious holy days; in 1868, it excluded the members of religious orders from the state schools. The area affected by these measures was the Catholic Northern Jura, the former temporal dominion of the prince-bishops of Basel, which had fallen to the Protestant canton of Berne in 1815. In the case of both laws, anti-Catholic reflexes blended with a determination to modernise a cantonal region that was in every respect eccentric and to integrate it into the Berne state. The prohibition of teachers belonging to the religious orders was directed principally at the Ursulines and Sisters of Charity, most

¹⁹ Philipp Anton von Segesser, *Briefwechsel*, ed. Victor Conzemius, to date 6 vols. (Zurich, Einsiedeln, Cologne and Fribourg, 1983–95), IV, 140.

²⁰ Lang, 'Unterwaldner Konflikt', 101–3; Alois Steiner, *Der Piusverein der Schweiz von seiner Gründung bis zum Vorabend des Kulturkampfes 1857–1870* (Stans, 1961).

of whom hailed from France. It was this law above all that triggered strong reactions – not only in the Jura, but across Catholic Switzerland. Voices were heard warning that the Jura could become a Swiss Ireland or Poland.²¹

In the following year, Augustin Keller, fearing once again, as in the 1840s, that his fatherland was threatened by Jesuitism, launched a campaign against the Basel diocesan seminary at Solothurn. The campaign culminated in a resolution by the Diocesan Conference in 1870 to close down the seminary. In the meanwhile, the First Vatican Council had placed the question of papal infallibility at the centre of political debate on the church. On the day after the closure of the seminary, a memorial celebration took place in the Berne country town of Langenthal, in memory of the *Freischarenzug* of 1845, an episode from the time of the anti-Jesuit campaign. The commemoration escalated into a demonstration against the spirit of the Vatican Council, which, in the view of the participants, endangered religious peace and the traditional rights and freedoms of the sovereign Swiss people. Even among conservative Catholics, the doctrine of infallibility was controversial. The most notable critique from this quarter stemmed from Philipp Anton von Segesser. Speaking from within that liberal Catholic tradition personified by Montalembert, Segesser rejected any form of ecclesiastical absolutism.²² On the other hand, Segesser and the other conservative anti-infallibilists rallied to the church when the radicals politicised their opposition to the dogma in a partisan sense and set about employing the instruments of state power against the church. When Bishop Lachat promulgated the decisions of the Council in February 1871, despite a strongly worded warning from the Diocesan Conference, the escalation of the conflict was only a matter of time. Radical politicians initially organised their resistance from within the Catholic church. In September 1871, the Association of Radical Catholics (*Verein freisinniger Katholiken*) was founded in Solothurn. The association had initially been planned as a means of bringing together oppositional forces within the church; over the following years, however, it was to develop into the Christian-Catholic church.²³ The Swiss schism began in October 1872, when Bishop Lachat dismissed and excommunicated the anti-infallibilist parish priest Paulin Gschwind von Starrkirch (canton of Solothurn). The Solothurn government resisted this measure and allowed Gschwind to continue practising

²¹ *Schweizerische Kirchenzeitung*, 25 April 1868, no. 17.

²² Philipp Anton von Segesser, *Am Vorabend des Conciliums* (Basel, 1869), reprinted in Philipp Anton von Segesser, *Sammlung kleiner Schriften* (Berne, 1877–9), 390–454. Cf. Segesser, *Briefwechsel*, V; Emil F.-J. Müller-Büchi, *Philipp Anton von Segesser. Das Konzil, die Revision der Bundesverfassung und der Kulturkampf* (Fribourg, 1977), 11–125.

²³ Victor Conzemius, *Katholizismus ohne Rom* (Zurich, Einsiedeln and Cologne, 1969), 70–81.

as a parish priest.²⁴ The effects of this case were twofold. On the one hand, it pointed the way towards the formation of 'Rome-free' parish congregations. In the cantons of Aargau and Solothurn especially, supporters of the Association of Radical Catholics used the democratic franchise to elect anti-infallibilist priests to various parishes. On the other hand, the Gschwind case also provided the Diocesan Conference with a pretext for removing Bishop Lachat from office at the end of January 1873. The conservative cantons of Zug and Lucerne voted against the decision, which was based on the fiction of an episcopal duty of obedience vis-à-vis the cantons. In April 1873, the bishop was evicted from his residence in Solothurn; he withdrew to Lucerne.

The removal of Lachat triggered a serious conflict in the Catholic Berne Jura.²⁵ After the priests of the Jura rallied to their bishop, they were relieved of their offices by the Berne government. The dismissed clerics were replaced by priests recruited by the government in France and Belgium, some of whom were of questionable reputation. A new cantonal Church Law (*Kirchengesetz*) that organised both denominations on the basis of the Protestant communal principle (*Gemeindeprinzip*) and introduced the popular election of parish priests was ratified by the people of Berne in January 1874. The Catholic Jura rejected the law by a substantial majority. In other ways, too, the Catholic population unmistakably demonstrated its loyalty to the traditional church order. As early as May and June 1873, several thousand men took part in protest gatherings. In September 1873, fifteen thousand Catholics of the Jura joined a pilgrimage to Mariastein in the neighbouring region of Solothurn. The pilgrimage to Notre Dame de Vorbourg near Delémont became an essential symbol of the Jura resistance.²⁶ The clerics who had been installed by the state, the so-called *intrus* (interlopers), also came to feel the discontent of the population. The government reacted in January 1874 by placing recalcitrant districts under military occupation and by expelling the dismissed priests. Most of the expellees settled in neighbouring areas across the border with France, from where they continued to maintain contact with their communities. While entire congregations participated in demonstrative pilgrimages into France, exiled priests repeatedly returned in secret to their parishes in order to provide pastoral care

²⁴ Lukas Walter, *Dulliken im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, vol. II: *Der Kulturkampf in der Pfarrei Starrkirch-Dulliken* (Dulliken, 1993), 31–84.

²⁵ François Noirjean, 'Conflits religieux dans le Jura catholique', in *Du Sonderbund au Kulturkampf. Delémont 19–23 avril 1999* (Lausanne, 2000), 42–94; Werner Humbel, *Der Kirchenkonflikt oder 'Kulturkampf' im Berner Jura 1873 bis 1878, unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Verhältnisses zwischen Staat und Kirche seit der Vereinigungsurkunde von 1815* (Berne, 1981).

²⁶ Iso Baumer, *Pèlerinages jurassiens. Le Vorbourg près Delémont (Suisse)* (Porrentruy, 1976), 98–105.

for their faithful. The record of this period of the underground church in the Jura is full of reports of the persecutions meted out to priests and the faithful, but also of the tricks and intrigues with which locals managed to outmanoeuvre the authorities.

Parallel to these events in the bishopric of Basel, a second conflict developed in Geneva.²⁷ In 1815/16, the boundaries of the Calvinist city-state of Geneva had been rounded out to enclose formerly French and Savoyan rural communities. Since then, the Catholic population had grown dramatically, thanks mainly to immigration from France. By 1870, Catholics accounted for some 51 per cent of the population. The revival of Catholicism aroused some concern among Genevan Protestants – the more so for the fact that Gaspard Mermillod, the *curé de Genève*, was the exponent of an ultramontane triumphalism. Further problems arose from the administrative circumstances of the diocese of Lausanne, whose post-Reformation seat had been moved to the Catholic city of Fribourg. In close contact with the Roman curia, Mermillod, who had been made titular bishop of Hebron in 1864, pursued a plan to re-establish the defunct bishopric of Geneva. In 1872, government circles began to realise that plans were afoot for the definitive severance of Geneva from the bishopric of Lausanne. Both the Genevan government, in which the anti-clerical Protestant radical, Antoine Carteret, had set the tone since the end of 1870, and the Federal Council made it clear that they would not accept such a development. When Mermillod was nevertheless appointed apostolic vicar, the Federal Council responded without delay: on 17 February 1873, two weeks after the announcement of the appointment, Mermillod was expelled from Switzerland. While the Mermillod affair escalated, the Geneva radicals launched a legislative initiative which was driven by a militant anti-Catholicism and aimed at the creation of a 'Rome-free' state church. The new stipulations concerning the swearing-in of clergymen and their election by the people, provided a legal means by which clergy loyal to the Catholic church could be levered out and replaced by state priests – here again, mainly foreigners. The loyal Catholics, who, acting on Mermillod's instructions, boycotted the parish elections, were gradually driven out of almost all parish churches. Parochial councils that refused to open their doors to state priests were disbanded. The state's claim to custodial control over liturgical instruments and parish books gave rise to further harassment. The holding of religious processions was forbidden, as was the wearing of clerical garb in public; the orders

²⁷ Jacques Delétraz, 'L'église catholique de Genève au XIX^e siècle', in *Encyclopédie de Genève*, vol. V: *Les religions* (Geneva, 1986), 178–91; Marc Pfeiffer, *Der Kulturkampf in Genf (1864–1873) mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Ausweisung von Bischof Mermillod* (Zurich, 1970).

and congregations were expelled, and their property was transferred to the state.

In no other canton did the *Kulturkampf* take on such drastic forms as in Geneva and the Berne Jura. To be sure, other cantons too experienced their greater or lesser culture wars.²⁸ Radical politicians in all areas were determined to drive back the influence of the church and to strengthen the instruments of state control. Church institutions, clergy and Catholic citizens were exposed to various forms of repression. Moreover, the establishment of Christian-Catholic congregations received warm support from the cantonal authorities, particularly in Solothurn and Aargau. Outside Berne and Geneva, however – and this is decisive – no cantonal government dared to use the state to force a Rome-free church upon the population. With regard to the Confederation, it should be noted that the Federal Council acted with the greatest possible caution in matters of church policy, both during and after the Vatican Council, and intervened as little as possible in this domain of cantonal sovereignty. Concrete provocations were needed before the federal government could be lured out of this policy of detachment. The first offensive step in its culture war was the expulsion of Mermillod. The second followed, in December 1873, with the expulsion of the papal nuncio Giovanni Battista Agnozzi as a reaction to the encyclical *Etsi multa luctuosa*, in which Pius IX complained bitterly of the church persecutions in Switzerland and Prussia and accused the federal authorities of breaking their pledges. In any case, the *Kulturkampf* had already become an issue in federal politics. Just as in the time of the *Sonderbund*, quarrels over church policy were interwoven with a political dispute over constitutional reform of the Swiss Confederation.²⁹

A first attempt at a partial revision of the federal constitution in 1865/6 had largely failed. At that time, only the emancipation of the Jews had been accepted by the people. The majority of the Catholic conservatives rejected all the proposed revisions. Confessional defence reflexes played a significant role. Frustrations over the systematic discrimination against loyal Catholics in the federal state manifested themselves not only in an insistence – as a matter of federalist principle – upon the sovereignty of the cantons, but also in a campaign against Jewish emancipation, in which the traditional

²⁸ On St Gallen, see Cornel Dora, *Augustinus Egger von St. Gallen 1833–1906. Ein Bischof zwischen Kulturkampf, sozialer Frage und Modernismustreit* (St Gallen, 1994). On Solothurn, see Thomas Wallner, *Geschichte des Kantons Solothurn 1831–1914. Verfassung – Politik – Kirche* (Solothurn, 1992), 426–44.

²⁹ Thomas Holenstein, *Die konfessionellen Artikel und der Schulartikel der schweizerischen Bundesverfassung* (Olten, 1931); Müller-Büchi, *Segesser*, 126–51, 231–62.

topoi of Catholic anti-Judaism were supplemented by elements of modern antisemitism.³⁰

After this largely unsuccessful attempt at piecemeal improvements, a comprehensive revision of the federal constitution was moved in 1870. It focused on two main areas: the extension of individual freedom and the reinforcement of federal powers, above all in military and educational matters. From the outset, the church-political emotions that had been stirred by the Vatican Council played a substantial role in the debate over constitutional revision. While the Swiss bishops demanded – in a rather anachronistically worded submission – more rights and freedoms for the church, radical politicians campaigned energetically for an alignment of the constitution with the exigencies of culture war. There were demands for an emphatically anticlerical definition of the freedom of faith and of conscience, the right of *placet* at federal level, the prohibition of new monasteries, a ban on novices, the abolition of the papal nunciature and the exclusion of the religious orders from schools. These proposals left only minimal traces on the constitutional project of 1872. Nevertheless, the conservative Catholics regarded the reforms as unacceptable for reasons both of religious interest and of federalist principle. Together with the federalist radicals of French-speaking Switzerland, they succeeded in bringing down the reform proposal through a plebiscite.

When the revision proposal was taken up again in 1873, it was overshadowed by the *Kulturkampf*, which had meanwhile entered its acute phase. Forgetting their linguistic and political differences, liberals and radicals united in supporting a project that was less centralistic, but was nonetheless emotionally charged, thanks to various anticlerical features. More significant than the individual stipulations (an extended definition of the freedom of faith and of conscience, the 'Episcopal Article' and the prohibition of new monasteries and orders), which still fell far short of the demands of militant anticlericals, was the fact that liberals and radicals, in order to overcome their internal differences, consciously excluded conservative Catholics from the national consensus. The verdict of the plebiscite of April 1874 was correspondingly unequivocal. The constitution was accepted everywhere except in the conservative Catholic cantons and in Ticino, where it appeared that the long years of radical preponderance were now over.

³⁰ Josef Lang, 'Der Widerstand gegen die Judenemanzipation in der Zentralschweiz 1862–1866', in Aram Mattioli (ed.), *Antisemitismus in der Schweiz 1848–1960* (Zurich, 1998), 193–212; Heidi Bossard-Borner, 'Judenfeindschaft im Kanton Luzern', in *ibid.*, 171–92; Aram Mattioli, 'Die Schweiz und die jüdische Emanzipation', in *ibid.*, 61–82, here 74–7; Josef Lang, 'Ultramontanismus und Antisemitismus in der Urschweiz – oder: Der Kampf gegen die Säkularisierung von Staat und Gesellschaft (1858–1878)', in Olaf Blaschke and Aram Mattioli (eds.), *Katholischer Antisemitismus im 19. Jahrhundert. Ursachen und Traditionen im internationalem Vergleich* (Zurich, 2000), 317–72.

The constitutional revision isolated the conservative Catholics, but it also contributed to the settlement of the *Kulturkampf*. Over the years, it became clear that the constitutional instrument of the referendum, which subjected federal laws to a plebiscite, could be used as a means of setting limits to the legislative zeal of radicalism. In the Jura, the effects of the federal revision were even more concrete and direct. For years, the conservative Catholics had appealed to the federal authorities against the various culture-war measures of the cantons and had regularly been turned down. However, once the new federal constitution had forbidden the expulsion of cantonal citizens, the Federal Council and later the parliament came to the conclusion – despite their partisan solidarity with the Berne government – that the banishment of the Jura priests could no longer be upheld. From the end of 1875, priests were able to return to the canton. A next step followed in 1878 at cantonal level: after the extreme radicals had been driven out of the Berne government, the priests were officially amnestied and thereby once again became formally eligible for election to parishes. The reconquest of the churches and parishes by Roman Catholics could now begin, on the basis of the cantonal church law of 1874, which stipulated the re-election of parish priests every four years. The process was facilitated by the fact that Pope Leo XIII authorised Bishop Lachat to leave the power of election *pro forma* in the hands of the congregations.

Things developed somewhat differently in the canton of Geneva. To be sure, the culture-war zeal of the radicals ebbed towards the end of the 1870s. But, on the opposing side, Mermillod saw to it that the boycott of the congregational and parochial elections continued. Only after 1890, when Mermillod was called as a cardinal to Rome, did the Genevan Catholics begin to use the possibilities of the law to regain control of their churches. The problem of the Genevan bishopric, on the other hand, was solved in 1883 after the death of Bishop Christophore Cossanday. Rome used the opportunity to remove the bone of contention – the apostolic vicariate of Geneva – by appointing Mermillod to the bishopric of Lausanne. The Federal Council, which had been confidentially informed of this intention in advance, agreed after some hesitation. The sensibilities of the Genevan radicals were spared by the fact that the new bishop abstained from making personal appearances in Geneva.

It proved somewhat more difficult to make good the damage done by the deposition of Bishop Lachat in the diocese of Basel.³¹ A solution was found in the linkage of the Basel episcopal question with that of Ticino. After

³¹ Jean-François Roth, *Le catholicisme politique jurassien entre libéralisme et ultramontanisme (1873–1896)* (Fribourg, 1992), 183–218.

protracted negotiations, two agreements were reached between the Holy See and the Federal Council on 1 September 1884. Lachat was appointed apostolic administrator of the canton of Ticino. The pope replaced him in the bishopric of Basel (the cathedral chapter responsible for the election was no longer operative after the years of disturbances) with the cathedral provost Friedrich Fiala, the candidate favoured by the diocesan cantons. The definitive clarification of Ticino's episcopal status followed after the death of Lachat, with the creation of the double bishopric of Basel and Lugano.³²

IN SEARCH OF CLUES: THE ROLE OF WOMEN

In a cursory overview of the most important church-political events, the *Kulturkampf* appears as a men's affair; it was men who acted as politicians, in the radical and Catholic conservative camps, who defended the cause of the church as priests and implemented state measures in the localities. And it was the men who, through the system of direct democracy, accepted or rejected *Kulturkampf* legislation, who decided in the congregations on the election or removal of priests loyal to Rome. That women, as Catholics, were no less affected by the consequences of the *Kulturkampf* than their male co-religionists is a commonplace. It is well known, moreover, that women accounted for a considerable proportion of the members of the Piusverein.³³ But researchers who are looking for more concrete information on the involvement of women in religious politics must immerse themselves in the details of local studies and biographies.

The activities of Catholic women during the conflicts in the Berne Jura are comparatively well documented. The female section of the Piusverein in Porrentruy, for example, became involved in providing catechetical instruction after the priests had been driven out. It also founded and financed a free girls' school and a kindergarten and assisted persons who were being prosecuted on account of their active support for the Roman Catholic church.³⁴ Women and young girls also played a prominent role when it came to making life difficult for state priests through everyday expressions of spite and spectacular demonstrative actions.³⁵ Olten, a small town in the canton of Solothurn provides a further example of how women served the cause of the church: in this community, 448 women

³² Dora, *Egger*, 307–27; Moretti, *Chiesa*, 160–76.

³³ Altermatt, *Katholizismus*, 205.

³⁴ Roth, *Catholicisme*, 38.

³⁵ Stadler, *Kulturkampf*, 394; Ernest Daucourt, *Scènes et récits du Kulturkampf dans le canton de Berne*, new edn (Porrentruy, 1982), 102–6, 153–69.

petitioned against the decision of the male electors to dismiss the ultramontane parish priest; when the Roman Catholic minority later organised itself on a private basis, women took part in the meetings of the association and supported the construction of a church through their financial contributions.³⁶

On the radical side, women were involved above all as the wives and daughters of those men who chose to join the Christian-Catholic movement. The majority of such women doubtless simply followed the decision of the head of household. But there were certainly some wives who consciously supported and helped to shape the church-political involvement of their men – examples would be Clementine Stocker-Steiger, daughter of the liberal Lucerne politician Jakob Robert Steiger and wife of the *Ständerat* Abraham Stocker, who founded the Christian-Catholic women's association after the death of her husband in 1887,³⁷ or the widow Maria Rosina Hofer, who married the renegade Starrkirch parish priest Paulin Gschwind.³⁸ That women could become involved with the Christian-Catholic cause quite independently of their family connections is demonstrated by the twelve unmarried women who joined the newly founded Christian-Catholic association of Lucerne in 1883, together with 131 men.³⁹ Equally self-willed and independent were those women who remained loyal to the Catholic church while living at the side of their Christian-Catholic husbands, and even succeeded in having their children baptised and instructed as Roman Catholics.⁴⁰

There was an awareness in church circles of the importance of women for the Catholic orientation of family life. Mothers' guilds (*Müttervereine*) were established in emulation of French and German models in order to raise women's consciousness of their task as mothers and educators.⁴¹ Nuns in teaching orders were also educators in the service of the Catholic cause. These women, who were motivated by a religious vocation to devote themselves to the education of children, were at the centre of a conflict that we shall now explore in greater detail.

³⁶ *Olten 1798–1991. Vom Untertanenstädtchen zum Wirtschaftspol* (Olten, 1991), 144–5; Alois Schenker, *Katholisch Olten. Geschichte der römisch-katholischen Pfarrei Olten seit 1872* (Olten, 1938), 74, 78.

³⁷ Otto Gilg, *Christkatholizismus in Luzern. Ein Beitrag zur Luzerner Geistesgeschichte* (Lucerne, 1946), 243–4.

³⁸ Walter, *Dulliken*, 133–5, 140–2, 223. ³⁹ Gilg, *Christkatholizismus*, 145.

⁴⁰ For examples from a rural parish in Lucerne, see Niklaus Zimmermann, *Heimatkunde von Wolhusen* (Willisau, 1929), 232–4.

⁴¹ *Schweizerische Kirchenzeitung*, 19 July 1873, no. 29. A number of documents from the early era of the *Müttervereine* are in the Staatsarchiv Luzern PA 285/515. Cf. Allematt, *Katholizismus*, 205; Simone Prodoliet, “‘Gebt mir katholische Töchter und Mütter, und ich werde mit ihnen die Welt erobern’ (Leo XIII.),” in *Itinera* 2/3 (1985), 5–21, here 5–6.

FROM VILLAGE QUARREL TO THE BATTLE OF THE SCHOOLS

In the Lucerne community of Ruswil, a village quarrel broke out that was to become a political affair of national significance. The impact of this affair on federal politics is well known.⁴² Here, however, we are primarily concerned with the local dimension. Through a careful examination of the records and of supplementary sources, we shall attempt to reconstruct the political, personal and ecclesiastical constellations that stood behind this '*Kulturkampf*' in the village'.

Lucerne was and is a Catholic canton.⁴³ In the nineteenth century, its political history was shaped by the struggle for power between liberals⁴⁴ and conservatives. In the 1830s, Lucerne had been one of the bastions of political and ecclesiastical liberalism. In 1841, however, the canton changed sides and took over the leading role in the Catholic-conservative *Sonderbund*. After the *Sonderbund* War, it was once again the liberals who dominated, until the conservatives finally regained power in 1871, against the background of the incipient *Kulturkampf*. During the *Kulturkampf*, therefore, Lucerne belonged to the conservative minority within the bishopric of Basel. Under the aegis of Philipp Anton von Segesser, who became, despite his reservations regarding the decisions of the Vatican Council, one of the most influential defenders of Catholic interests, the conservative government strove in its external relations with the radical diocesan cantons and with the federal state to avoid any provocation. It was therefore scrupulous in ensuring that Bishop Lachat did not perform any official functions in those cantons which had deposed him.⁴⁵ Within the canton itself, the conservative government protected the Catholic church and made use of every possible legal instrument to hinder the rise of Christian-Catholicism.⁴⁶

There was also, now as in earlier years, a substantial liberal minority in Lucerne. At the end of 1871, the Association of Radical Catholics was established as an anti-infallibilist organisation. Its main support base was in the city of Lucerne, where the liberals were particularly strongly represented and intermittently even dominated the local church council (*Kirchenrat*). It proved impossible nonetheless to win the city parish over to

⁴² Cf. Stadler, *Kulturkampf*, 561–80; Johannes Mösch, *Der Schulvogt. Der Kampf für und gegen ein eigenständiges, zentralistisches Primarschulgesetz 1882* (Olten, 1962).

⁴³ In 1880 the proportion of Catholics was 96 per cent, in 1990, 78 per cent. *Statistik*, 154.

⁴⁴ In Lucerne, all varieties of *Freisinn* are known as 'liberal'. In the context of the following local study, I shall follow this usage.

⁴⁵ Stadler, *Kulturkampf*, 298–300; Philipp Anton von Segesser, *Fünfundvierzig Jahre im Luzernischen Staatsdienst. Erinnerungen und Akten aus dem kantonalen Leben 1841–1887* (Berne, 1887), 526–31.

⁴⁶ Gilg, *Christkatholizismus*, 110–15, 146–62; Segesser, *Staatsdienst*, 506–26, 658–87.

Christian-Catholicism.⁴⁷ This reflected the fact that – characteristically for the party politics of the entire canton – the numbers of those who dared to separate themselves formally from the Catholic church were substantially fewer than the support base of the liberal party.

With 4,150 inhabitants in 1880, Ruswil was, after the city of Lucerne, the most populous community of the canton. It was a well-off peasant community which, as a rural centre, also boasted an impressive proportion of commercial and professional occupations. In June 1876, the citizens of Ruswil resolved at the request of the conservative communal council (*Gemeinderat*) to establish a secondary school for girls.⁴⁸ The decision was itself noteworthy: secondary girls' schools were not common in village communities; the relatively few country girls who did not make do with primary school and needlework classes generally attended the district schools together with the boys. In Ruswil, there were a number of practical arguments for the proposed foundation. New premises were in any case necessary to house the girls' needlework classes. It thus made sense to establish a proper school in this locality and thereby to relieve some of the pressure on the heavily subscribed district school – the canton would foot three-quarters of the salaries. Moreover, the new school could lay claim to a tradition: back in the 1840s, Ruswil had possessed a secondary school for girls. A further, unspoken, argument derived from the personality of the serving district teacher, Joseph Steffen. This militant liberal caused offence with his anticlerical zeal, but was also a difficult character in other respects. In 1878, reports of moral misdemeanours made their way into the press; Steffen was committed to a psychiatric institution on account of a 'nervous state of mind'.⁴⁹ These issues were not yet openly discussed in 1876. It was clear nonetheless that the foundation of the school had a political dimension, given the constellation of the individuals involved. The liberal teacher opposed the project; its supporters stemmed from the Catholic camp. The conservative cantonal councillor Joseph Banz, a particularly energetic supporter of the girls' school, was also a founding member of the Piusverein.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Gilg, *Christkatholizismus*, 128–53; Alois Steiner, *Katholische Kirchgemeinde Luzern 1874–1974. Ein Beitrag zur Luzerner Geistesgeschichte* (Lucerne, 1973), 11–34.

⁴⁸ *Bundesblatt der Schweizerischen Eidgenossenschaft* (1880), I, 443–64. The following account is based on the documents in the Staatsarchiv Luzern, AKT 34/318A–B, 34/363M, and in the Schweizerisches Bundesarchiv Bern, E 80 435–36 (vol. IV). Cf. Rudolf Henggeler, *Das Institut der Lehrschwestern vom Heiligen Kreuze in Menzingen (Kt. Zug) 1844–1944* (Menzingen, 1944), 188–214.

⁴⁹ Staatsarchiv Luzern AKT 34/361X; *Luzerner Landbote* 25 January/8 February 1878, no. 8/12. Cf. Segesser, *Staatsdienst*, 614; a more explicit account can be found in Segesser's notes, Staatsarchiv Luzern AKT 34/363N.

⁵⁰ Steiner, *Piusverein*, 36, 52.

Moreover, it was he who urged that the new school should be entrusted to one of the teaching nuns of the Menzingen Congregation.⁵¹

Only 80 of the 1,020 persons entitled to vote took part in the decisive communal meeting. According to liberal rumour, the members of the Piusverein were personally brought in to vote, while many liberals missed the announcement of the meeting, which had been issued, as the laws required, during the Sunday church service. As a consequence, a liberal motion that the school should not be entrusted to a teaching nun was rejected by a clear majority. In an official declaration, the lawyer Mathias Schmidlin protested in a minuted declaration that the proposed girls' school would be 'a purely confessional teaching institute'. No fewer than 200 heads of household subsequently joined this protest. Schmidlin launched an appeal in their name to the cantonal government. Turned down by the Lucerne government, he took the appeal further in September 1876 to the Federal Council. Two weeks later, the conservative Ruswilers elected the Menzingen sister Calasantia Huber. The secular counter-candidate was not seriously supported by the opposition; only 140 citizens took part in the election. On the other hand, the example of the Ruswil appeal did prompt emulation in the neighbouring community of Buttisholz: twenty-two citizens appealed to the Federal Council against the re-election of the Ingenbohl nun Cölestina Abletshauser, who had been responsible for the four upper girls' classes of the primary school since 1874.

The appellants invoked the authority of the federal constitution. The activity of the teaching nuns, they argued, was incompatible with Article 27, which required that primary schools must be subject to state control and must not compromise the pupils' freedom of faith or conscience. In support of this argumentation, the various communications forwarded from Ruswil and Buttisholz to the Federal Council drew on the entire repertoire of negative clichés about teaching nuns and Catholic schools: the nuns, they claimed, were subject exclusively to the authority of their clerical superiors and thus beyond the control of the state. Their teaching was allegedly pedagogically and intellectually inadequate. Their activities were suffused throughout with the spirit of the Roman hierarchy; this could be felt not only in their religious instruction, but also shaped their handling of other subjects such as language, natural science and history. The teaching nuns, it was suggested, exploited schools as a vehicle for Catholic propaganda; there would thus be deliberate discrimination against children from liberal families. With great pathos, the appellants also invoked the authority of

⁵¹ On the nuns' congregations of Menzingen and Ingenbohl, cf. *Helvetia sacra*, VIII/2, 184–212, 279–315.

European history. They argued that convent schools had proved 'inadequate to the demands of practical life and hindered the establishment of progressive social conditions'. They painted the horror scenario of a fifth column in Switzerland: education would fall into clerical hands, just as in France where under the impact of the Jesuits and their affiliated orders of teaching brothers and teaching sisters 'the belief in miracles, superstition, intolerance and religious fanaticism' was flourishing in the schools. Despite the ban imposed on the Jesuits by the federal constitution, 'virtually the entire clergy of Catholic Switzerland consisted of Jesuits'. It was therefore necessary to purge the schools of any clerical influence and to transfer the supervision of teacher training and the primary schools to the federal government.

Mathias Schmidlin, the spokesman of the appellants, had joined the Lucerne Association of Radical Catholics in 1872.⁵² However, unlike in several other communities of the region, it did not prove possible to establish a local section of the association in Ruswil itself. Schmidlin had thus far also failed to achieve any success in political terms; in the elections of 1875 to the cantonal parliament, he had succeeded in mustering a total of just two votes.⁵³ He clearly perceived the question of the teaching sisters as an opportunity to heighten his profile. The issue was indeed of more than simply local interest. The Lucerne liberals observed with concern that a kind of re-Catholicisation of the cantonal school system had been taking place since the conservatives had come to power in 1871, and that liberal teachers were coming under increasing pressure.⁵⁴ Nor did the growing significance of the teaching nuns in the schools of the Catholic cantons escape their notice; in 1880 they were in control of no fewer than 240 schools.⁵⁵ To be sure, only a few sisters were at this time active in the canton of Lucerne, but even here there were signs of growth – between 1876 and 1880, their number increased from five to thirteen.⁵⁶ Schmidlin's initiative thus won the support of leading liberal politicians. Abraham Stocker, a former member of the Council of States and one of the most prominent exponents of Christian-Catholicism in the canton of Lucerne, took up the cause of his Ruswil party colleague with the federal councillor Numa Droz, director of the relevant government department.

It is not possible to establish with any certainty how many of the appellants shared the missionary anticlericalism of Schmidlin and his protectors.

⁵² Staatsarchiv Luzern PA 363/1–2. ⁵³ Staatsarchiv Luzern AKT 32/662.

⁵⁴ For an overview, see *Luzerner Tagblatt*, 14, 16/17, 20–23 April 1880, nos. 89, 91/92, 94–97. Cf. *Schweizerische Lehrerzeitung*, 29 April 1876, no. 18.

⁵⁵ *Bundesblatt* (1881), I, 33. ⁵⁶ Staatsarchiv Luzern AKT 34/205B.

We can probably assume that the twenty-two appellants from Buttisholz were recruited from the circle of the fifty-odd resident liberals. They were characterised in the conservative press as 'a handful of enlightened ones'.⁵⁷ The situation in Ruswil was rather more complicated. It should first of all be noted that the 200 appellants did not sign the various petitions, but rather provided Schmidlin with a blanket authorisation to make the appeal. According to the communal council, many of the signatures had been acquired on false pretences. In Ruswil, the liberal party could count on 100–20 votes at the best.⁵⁸ The proportion of these who also entertained stringently liberal views in church matters was considerably smaller. Apart from Schmidlin and his son, no Ruswiler had joined the Association of Radical Catholics.⁵⁹ It may well be that a considerable proportion of the 200 Ruswil citizens did not support the appeal for political or ecclesiastical motives, but rather for financial reasons. They spoke out against the teaching sisters, because they were not prepared, as tax-payers, to carry the costs of the school's foundation.⁶⁰ A background factor may well have been the widely held conviction that girls' secondary schools were a dispensable luxury. It should also be noted that the very concept of girls' schools was as such controversial. They were seen as a specifically urban institution. In the rural context, most of those responsible for schooling – teachers, supervisory authorities and politicians – favoured the principle of co-education. While they supported the further development of rural education, they sought to achieve this not through segregation of the sexes, but rather through the streaming of pupils according to age-groups. And so it was in Buttisholz: when Sister Abletshauser was appointed in 1874 as a supplementary teacher, the school inspector, a part of the school committee, the cantonal Council of Education and various citizens – not the same ones who signed the appeal – wished her to take over the instruction of two mixed classes. Only after urgent pleading from the community did the Council of Education permit the teaching nun to take on the four upper girls' classes instead. The rejection of girls' schools was often connected, moreover, with a fundamental scepticism vis-à-vis female teachers. The teaching profession was still, by and large, a domain of men, and many school experts were convinced that female teachers, whether secular or religious, were fit only for the instruction of the youngest male and female

⁵⁷ *Luzerner Landbote*, 29 December 1876, no. 104.

⁵⁸ The respective strength of the parties can be estimated from the results of the votes for the federal revisions of 1872 and 1874. The numbers are as follows (people entitled to vote / Yes = liberal / No = conservative): Ruswil 1872: 1,031 / 120 / 843; 1874: 1,075 / 112 / 863. Buttisholz 1872: 403 / 48 / 321; 1874: 458 / 44 / 387. *Luzernisches Kantonsblatt* (1872), 362–3; *ibid.* (1874), 278–9.

⁵⁹ Staatsarchiv Luzern PA 363/1.

⁶⁰ Cf. Segesser, *Staatsdienst*, 612.

pupils, but not for education at higher levels.⁶¹ It was above all strongly church-minded circles that propagated sexual segregation and emphasised the educational talent of women.⁶² Thus the Buttisholz priest Jakob Leu observed that the influence of a woman was essential for the formation of the 'female character'. 'Purity' and 'morality' were clearly not the only issues here. The formation of future wives was obviously a central concern. Councillor Banz in Ruswil is reported to have declared that schools must 'implant a better religious education within the family'. The girls' schools could be seen from this point of view to fulfil the same purpose as the mothers' guilds, and it is surely no coincidence that an Association of Christian Mothers was founded in Ruswil in the year following the establishment of the school.⁶³ On the other hand, the concept of gender-specific education was not uncontested in Catholic circles. While the priest of Buttisholz vigorously supported the girls' school, his colleague from Großwangen voted against it in the school committee.

It is conceivable that in Ruswil, too, differences of opinion within the Catholic camp spilled over into the school question. The parish priest who had looked after the parish for more than half a century died in 1875. Father Joseph Sigrist, a student of Johann Michael Sailer, had been a zealous pastor of souls, but he had not been an exponent of ultramontaniam. The acting priest was Xaver Wermelinger, who had been Sigrist's assistant and had enjoyed his confidence. The assistant and acting priest was popular and in 1877 he was elected parish priest by a substantial majority. There was, however, a small faction which would have preferred a more strictly observant clergyman. They made Wermelinger's life so difficult during the transitional period that he chose not to apply for the position of parish priest; indeed he had to be persuaded by the local church council (*Kirchenrat*) to accept his election.⁶⁴ There is good reason to suspect that Wermelinger's opponents came from the same emphatically church-oriented milieu of the *Piusverein* as the supporters of the girls' school. This may help to explain why many conservative Catholics showed little inclination to identify with the school project and responded instead with apathy or even with open protest.

⁶¹ Thus Martin Birmann, 4 September 1877, Staatsarchiv Luzern AKT 34/363 M. Cf. *Jahrbuch der Luzernischen Kantonal-Lehrerkonferenz* (1876), 44–59.

⁶² Cf. *Kirchenzeitung*, 12. December 1863, no. 50; *Die Lehrschiwesternfrage vom Standpunkte des Rechts, der Freiheit und des öffentlichen Wohles beleuchtet durch Philaletes* (Solothurn, 1880), 24–5.

⁶³ Berte Widmer, *Ruswil. Geschichte einer Luzerner Landgemeinde* (Ruswil, 1987), 494.

⁶⁴ Pfarrarchiv Ruswil B 17, 136–8, Protokoll der Kirchenverwaltung, 29 April and 12 May 1877; *Luzerner Tagblatt*, 14/29 June 1876, no. 142/54; *Das Vaterland*, 25 June 1876, no. 146; *Luzerner Landbote*, 29 June 1877, no. 52.

It was not the task of the Federal Council to enquire after the religious motives that had doubtless played a role in the foundation of a girls' school. As the authority to which the appeals from Ruswil and Buttisholz had been addressed, its task was to decide whether the activity of the two teaching nuns was in breach of current Swiss law or not. Its first step was to invite the Lucerne government to make a full statement of its position. The cantonal government declared that the complaints were completely unfounded. The teaching nuns were required to fulfil the same criteria and were subject to the same state supervision as secular teachers were. Their activity had not hitherto given rise to any complaints whatsoever. Moreover the quality of their teaching had been assessed by the school inspectors as well above average. Freedom of faith and of conscience remained intact. Under the cantonal school law, parents were free at any time to withdraw their children from religious instruction. These representations did not satisfy the Federal Council, which now commissioned Martin Birmann, the liberal representative of the canton of Basel-Landschaft in the Council of States, to inspect the schools in Ruswil and Buttisholz. Birmann was a Protestant theologian and an expert in the fields of education and social policy. He made no secret of his lack of sympathy for many aspects of Catholicism. During the revision of the federal constitution, he had voted for the exclusion of the teaching orders from schools.⁶⁵ And yet, after due consideration of the facts and the legal context, he reached a verdict in favour of the teaching nuns: their schools, he reported, were among the best that he knew; state supervision was in place; the fact that the sisters were believing Catholics did not suffice to exclude them from employment as teachers.⁶⁶ After much hesitation, the Federal Council accepted the view of its expert. In February 1880, it turned down the appeals from Ruswil and Buttisholz, together with a further similar appeal from the Appenzell village of Eggerstanden.⁶⁷

Mathias Schmidlin appealed to the federal parliament against this decision. As a consequence, the issue now became a focus of public interest and intertwined itself with the debate over the drawing up of a federal law of education. The village quarrel ultimately turned into a conflict of principles over teaching nuns and Catholic education. It awakened once again the passions of culture war, and this at a time when the *Kulturkampf*

⁶⁵ *Kirchenzeitung*, 2 April 1881, no. 14.

⁶⁶ Fritz Grieder, *Martin Birmann (1828–1890). Basellandschaftlicher Philantrop, Sozialhelfer, Politiker* (Liestal, 1991); Julia Gauß, 'Martin Birmann. Erfahrungen und Bemühungen aus der Zeit des Kulturkampfes', *Basler Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 79 (1979), 225–52.

⁶⁷ *Bundesblatt* (1880), I, 417–28.

as such had already lost a great deal of its virulence. The radicals characterised the teaching nuns and their schools as the epitome of a militant clericalism infiltrating Switzerland. The Catholics for their part perceived the polemics against the teaching nuns as an attack upon the substance of their confessional identity. The governments of the Catholic cantons thus made representations to the federal authorities on the teaching nuns' behalf. The Catholic population was also mobilised; a petition was drawn up that attracted 40,378 signatures.⁶⁸ The opposing side relied less on mass action than on political connections in high places. In February 1881, an assembly of Catholic-radical notables published a letter to the federal parliament in which they pointed out that the issue at stake was nothing less than the question of whether the state or the church should exercise dominion in the schools.⁶⁹ In Lucerne, the Central Committee of the Liberals sent a letter of its own in April, in which Joseph Leonz Weibel, cantonal councillor and future president of the Christian-Catholic congregation described the teaching nuns as 'a serious danger for the Swiss nation'.⁷⁰

The people of Ruswil and Buttisholz also made themselves heard once more – this time with arguments in favour of the teaching nuns. While 224 citizens in Buttisholz expressed their satisfaction with sister Abletshauser, 111 of the appellants in Ruswil now distanced themselves from the appeal and declared that they had no objections to the activity of the teaching nun.⁷¹ In view of the dimensions that the affair had by now gained, it would appear that some of those who had blithely joined the appeal in 1876 now shrank back from the consequences of their actions. It would be wrong to see the retractors as passive conformists, for they included a man like postmaster Moritz Achermann, a former teacher. He had contributed to the supposed evidence against the teaching nuns with the claim that the Buttisholz sister had refused, on the grounds of the discipline of her order, to read the publications of the Cantonal Teachers' Conference. On the question of how much social or religious pressure was involved in such 'conversions', the sources are silent. But the fact that it was the conservative councillor Banz who conveyed the retractions to the federal authorities is itself an indication that he too had been involved in putting them together. The fact that the Christian-Catholic schism had in the meantime taken concrete forms may well have contributed to the 'conversions'. Christian-Catholic congregations had emerged in several localities of the region – a

⁶⁸ Bundesblatt (1881), I, 34–6.

⁶⁹ Examples are in Staatsarchiv Luzern AKT 34/252B and PA 363/125. Mösch, *Schulvogt*, 30–2.

⁷⁰ *Neuer Beitrag zur Lehrschwesternfrage* (Lucerne, 1881).

⁷¹ Bundesarchiv E 80 Nr. 436, 25 November 1880.

number of burials had made the existence of the new church quite conspicuous. Particularly mortifying for sensitive spirits was the example of the neighbouring community of Wolhusen: several days after the separation of the Christian-Catholics, one of them died a sudden death in January 1879. The Christian-Catholics of the region used the burial, led by their bishop Eduard Herzog, as a demonstration of solidarity. The local church council, for its part, closed the church and forbade the holding of speeches at the cemetery. Two months later, when a Christian-Catholic baptism took place in Wolhusen, the house of the father was disfigured with black paint. Rosaries were said every evening in the Catholic church for the conversion of the renegades.⁷² In view of such instances, we may assume that in Ruswil only people of unshakeable liberal conviction remained committed to the appeal. In the covering letter that accompanied the retractions, councillor Banz could also point out that the number of appellants had now shrunk yet further: seventeen had died, thirteen had moved away and twenty-one, among them the leader, Mathias Schmidlin, had forfeited their right to vote on account of bankruptcy; there were thus formally only thirty-nine Ruswilers left who remained committed to the appeal. Of the twenty-two Buttisholz appellants, only four remained.⁷³

The National Council dealt with the question of the teaching nuns in April 1881. After an extremely emotive exchange of speeches, the conviction gained ground that the activity of the teaching sisters could not be banned on the basis of currently valid law. But the majority were unwilling, nevertheless, to speak in favour of the sisters. Instead, the case was passed on to the Federal Council for a new judgement. The aim of the manoeuvre was to regulate the question of the teaching nuns in the context of a federal law of education. As a consequence, the debate over the proposed law, which was just entering its critical phase at this time, focused on the question of whether a non-denominational school system was possible or desirable. As a first step, the parliament decided to establish the position of a federal secretary of education, whose task it would be to collect information on conditions within the schools of the cantons.⁷⁴ The decision did not prejudice future legislation. However, since there could be no doubt that the radicals wished to eliminate every last denominational element from the schools, the creation of this highly paid bureaucratic post met with

⁷² Staatsarchiv Luzern PA 363/191; Zimmermann, *Wolhusen*, 231–2; Gilg, *Christkatholizismus*, 139.

⁷³ Segesser, *Staatsdienst*, 613.

⁷⁴ Franz Xaver Hard, *Der eidgenössische Erziehungssekretär. Bestrebungen zu einer gesamtschweizerischen Schulkoordination im Jahre 1882* (Zurich, 1972); Thomas Widmer, *Die Schweiz in der Wachstumskrise der 1880er Jahre* (Zurich, 1992), 283–334.

vigorous opposition from church-minded circles of both denominations. This was reinforced by fundamental scepticism concerning any extension of federal authority. The referendum against the 'school governor' – the polemical label '*Schulvogt*' equated the secretary of education with the foreign governors of the medieval era – was launched by the Protestant-conservative Eidgenössischer Verein, with whom the conservative Catholics joined forces. After a very vigorous referendum and election campaign, the plebiscite took place on 26 November 1882. It ended with an unequivocal popular verdict against the educational programme of the radicals. The relevant bill was rejected by 64.8 per cent of those who voted. The highest percentage of no-votes – with over 90 per cent – came from the Catholic-conservative cantons of Central Switzerland and Appenzell-Innerrhoden. Of greater importance, however, for the final outcome was the fact that many Protestants of liberal and radical leanings refused to support their representatives. Only the cantons of Basel-Stadt, Thurgau and Neuchâtel, not to mention Solothurn, the bastion of radical Catholicism, presented affirmative majorities. All other cantons in which the *Kulturkampf* had had a serious impact rejected the bill.

To return to the place where the affair began: in Ruswil and Buttisholz, 107 and 34 citizens respectively voted for the secretary of education.⁷⁵ This proportion corresponded approximately to the liberals' usual share of the vote. In this sense, the result of the plebiscite made it clear that both communities had returned to that party-political normality which had been – particularly in Ruswil – temporarily suspended by the appeal.

CONCLUSION

'The sheer variety of Swiss life, what I think of as its "cellular" character, makes it hard to write a coherent account of the place.'⁷⁶ What Jonathan Steinberg observes for Switzerland as a whole applies in equal measure to a historical phenomenon like the *Kulturkampf*. As this survey of scenes and events has made clear, the phenomenon that is widely known as the *Kulturkampf* in fact consisted of a multiplicity of culture wars, each with its own special preconditions, its own rhythm and its own dynamic. In addition to this parallelism of simultaneous culture wars, there was also the diversity of experiences across time: the culture wars of the 1870s and 1880s were not isolated events, but rather were embedded in a continuity of confessional conflict that spanned the entire century.

⁷⁵ *Luzernisches Kantonsblatt* (1882), 1333.

⁷⁶ Jonathan Steinberg, *Why Switzerland?* 2nd edn (Cambridge, 1996), 1.

Our case study exemplifies the diversity of experiences that characterised the *Kulturkampf* in Switzerland. The local events discussed in this chapter did not take place in one of the centres of confrontation, but in a Catholic-conservative canton which is usually counted among the 'conflict-free zones'.⁷⁷ It demonstrates the extent to which the spirit of culture war could pervade the atmosphere of day-to-day life, even in a region where the authorities and the majority of the population remained loyal to the Catholic church. Our case study is also interesting because it encompasses two different forms of culture war. On the one hand, we have the basic model of the *Kulturkampf* in its traditional sense: radical Catholics attack the institutions of ultramontane Catholicism while appealing to the solidarity of like-minded comrades elsewhere in order to compensate for their minority position within a given locality. However, alongside this familiar model we may discern a kind of 'inverted *Kulturkampf*' – the campaign of a combative Catholicism that, secure in the protection it enjoys from a conservative cantonal government, consciously exploits its majority position in order to drive back liberal forces. For the foundation of the Ruswil girls' school was not simply about maximising educational opportunities for girls; rather it was about a power struggle between liberal and conservative Catholics over the question of whether the education of future wives and mothers would be suffused with the spirit of liberalism, or with that of traditional Catholic loyalty.

The great majority of the population in Ruswil was loyal to their church: 800 of 1,000 voters supported the conservative party. But the conflict over the girls' school shows that only relatively few of these conservative Catholics were prepared to become involved as political activists on behalf of a Catholicism that had gone over to the offensive. Not even 10 per cent attended the communal assembly at which the controversial decision on the girls' school was reached. Even after Schmidlin's appeal had unmistakably demonstrated that the situation amounted to a *Kulturkampf* in miniature, only 140 citizens could be bothered to participate in the election of the teaching nun. As for the degree of mobilisation on the liberal side, the Buttisholz appeal, which was signed by about half of the liberal voters, is probably representative. On the other hand, the 200 Ruswilers who supported the appeal should not be equated with the camp of the liberal culture warriors. The comparatively large number of appellants was only possible because a number of other interests came into play. The majority of the appellants used the opportunity in order to protest against

⁷⁷ Stadler, *Kulturkampf*, 547.

the foundation of a school that, in their view, was not necessary or appropriate and would impose an undesirable burden on communal finances. The proportion of those who rejected the teaching sister on the basis of culture-war motives was presumably hardly any greater than in Buttisholz; the total of thirty-nine die-hards who stuck by the appeal to the bitter end is probably quite representative. As for the chief appellant, Mathias Schmidlin, it is worth noting that this rural lawyer and mettlesome culture warrior had obviously internalised the anticlerical discourse on Catholic education and proved adept at discerning the broader principles involved in the Ruswil school dispute. For him, therefore, blocking the foundation of the school was no longer the primary objective. Given the low participation of the conservatives, this could easily have been achieved through the coordinated deployment of the liberal voters. But the fact is that from the outset his chief concern was to create a precedent. He wanted to take this village dispute, in which the problems of high politics were so conveniently mirrored, to the federal level, so as to demonstrate to the Swiss public that argument was not simply over a village school and the religious sensibilities of a few dozen liberals, but rather that nothing less than the future of Swiss education was at stake.

The appeals against the teaching nuns did indeed culminate in a general conflict of principles over education, and this led once again to a substantial flaring-up of the *Kulturkampf*. Once again, the radicals appealed to anti-Roman and anticlerical emotions in order to elicit support for their educational policy from those sections of the population that did not identify with conservative Catholicism of the Roman type. The plebiscite on the 'school governor' thus became – despite the comparatively harmless content of the proposal – a verdict on the education policy of the radicals and on the *Kulturkampf* as a whole. Since the radicals now professed their support for non-denominational education, an alliance emerged between Catholics and believing Protestants. The anti-Roman sentiment that had determined the outcome of the struggle over federal constitutional revision had lost its integrative political power. The 'school governor' plebiscite put an abrupt end to plans for federal education legislation in Switzerland. At the same time, it was a signal that the era of the great culture wars was coming to an end. Thereafter, conflicts over issues of church policy would confine themselves to rear-guard actions in specific cantons. There was a general feeling that the time had come to find a way back to normality. The resolution of the long-standing episcopal disputes in 1883/4 was a first step on the road to normalisation. A second step, of great symbolic importance, followed at federal level in 1891 when the Lucerner Josef Zemp became

the first conservative Catholic to be voted into the Federal Council. His election demonstrated that, in the face of rising socialism, the ideological opposition between liberalism and conservative Catholicism had lost its urgency. What survived from the *Kulturkampf* were those laws and constitutional provisions which, suffused with the spirit of radical anticlericalism, imposed clear boundaries upon the Catholic church at federal and cantonal level. However, the attempt to weaken the influence of the church on the Catholic population must clearly be judged a failure. On the contrary: Swiss Catholicism after the storms of the *Kulturkampf* displayed an ideological cohesion that it had not possessed before 1870. Only on the basis of this cohesion could the Catholic 'sub-society'⁷⁸ emerge that increasingly shaped the life of observant Swiss Catholics from the 1880s until well into the middle of the twentieth century.

⁷⁸ Cf. Altermatt, *Katholizismus*, 103–18.

*The Counter-Reformation's last stand: Austria**Laurence Cole*

There are many memorable passages in Joseph Roth's *The Radetzky March*, but few are more evocative of imperial Austria than his description of the annual Corpus Christi procession, which celebrated the sacrament of the Host: 'In black lacquered carriages sat the gold-decked Knights of the Golden Fleece and sober, apple-cheeked fathers. After them, like majestic hurricanes, fluttered the horsehair plumes of the infantry body-guard. Finally, the bells of St Stephen's Cathedral pealed the welcome of the Roman Church to the... old Emperor.'¹ For Roth, looking back on the defunct Habsburg Monarchy from troubled inter-war central Europe, the display of majesty embodied a timeless feeling of stability and well-being, yet it was only comparatively recently that the Corpus Christi celebration had become the major state-patriotic display just described. Recent work by Daniel Unowsky reveals how the new emperor Francis Joseph sanctioned a revival of 'traditional' rituals as part of the restoration of monarchical authority after the 1848–9 revolutions.² Alongside the foot-washing ceremony, when the emperor cleansed the feet of twelve paupers from the city of Vienna at Eastertide, the Corpus Christi celebration was transformed into a major event in the official calendar. In short, the Habsburg court recodified neglected practices in order to demonstrate publicly the restored, absolute power of the divinely ordained, Catholic ruler.

The highly visible reassertion of Francis Joseph's sovereignty provides a useful entry-point into the 'culture wars era', because it illustrates a major tension between two historical lines of state-building in Austria. In the first place, the form and intensity of the Austrian culture wars can

¹ Joseph Roth, *The Radetzky March*, (London, 1974), 186.

² Daniel L. Unowsky, 'Reasserting Empire: Habsburg Imperial celebrations after the Revolutions of 1848–1849', in Maria Bucur and Nancy M. Wingfield (eds.), *Staging the Past: The Politics of Commemoration in Habsburg Central Europe, 1848 to the Present* (West Lafayette, Ind., 2001), 13–45.

only be understood with reference to the enduring legacy of the Counter-Reformation. The profoundly Catholic direction of the Habsburg state was a tribute to the success of re-Catholicisation in their western territories after victory over the Protestants at the Battle of the White Mountain in 1620. A vital part of the Catholic renewal was the cultivation of personal piety by Habsburg rulers, and it was this notion of the '*Pietas Austriaca*' that Francis Joseph's regime cultivated from the 1850s. Secondly, while the latter's reign began in highly conservative fashion from a religious-ideological viewpoint, it also possessed strong echoes of the 'enlightened absolutism' of the second half of the eighteenth century. In other words, the 1850s reforms in the economic sphere, bureaucracy and education paralleled the drive towards an internally more cohesive state undertaken during Maria Theresia and Joseph II's attempts at 'modernisation from above'.

It is the awkward interaction between these traditions in the post-1848 period that provides the framework for the Austrian culture wars. The systemic tension between the two agendas became particularly acute because of the altered relationship between church and state during the early years of Francis Joseph's regime, as defined in the Concordat of 1855. During a period of quickening economic change and against a background of military disasters, the Austrian culture wars effectively amounted to a struggle within emerging civil society for influence over the direction of a state that soon had to choose more clearly between a modernisation programme backed by bourgeois public opinion and its preference for religious authoritarianism.

For our purposes, 'Austria' will be taken to mean the 'Austrian half' of the Habsburg Monarchy, the area which came to be known as 'Cisleithania' after the 1867 Compromise with Hungary. Nineteenth-century Austria was thus a multi-national society, principally comprising Germans, Czechs, Poles, Italians, Slovenes and 'Ruthenes' (Ukrainians), as well as a multi-confessional one.³ Within these boundaries, Uniate Catholics and Greek Orthodox, as well as the majority of Jews, resided mainly to the east, in Galicia, Austria's portion of the Polish partitions. In the western part of Cisleithania, where the Germans were the dominant ethnic group, the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants were Roman Catholics (95–9 per cent), and it was precisely here that the culture wars were to have their greatest impact.

³ For full details, see Adam Wandruszka and Peter Urbanitsch, *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848–1918*, vol. IV: *Die Konfessionen* (Vienna, 1985).

THE KULTURKAMPF ERA IN AUSTRIA

The roots of the Austrian culture wars may in one sense be traced back to the late eighteenth-century reform era, not least for the fact that the combatants of the 1860s–70s often categorised their behaviour in pro- and anti-Enlightenment language. In terms of state policy, the reforms known as ‘Josephism’ had marked an important break with the Counter-Reformatory tradition in two key respects. Firstly, the church was brought under much closer state control, with the result that the majority of the clergy became part of a virtual ‘state church’ (*Staatskirche*) apparatus. Secondly, Joseph II’s Toleration Patents of the early 1780s represented an open challenge to the Catholic church’s monopoly position in the Monarchy’s western territories. Neither of these developments was uncontroversial, as popular protests and opposition from sections of the church obliged the state to back down on some of its more extreme proposals by 1800. Although some scholars have been inclined to see the Josephist era as the start of a continuous, century-long period of cultural conflict,⁴ this would be misleading. Once the initial period of reform was over, the realignment between church, government and society proved an effective settlement, because there was fundamental agreement about the church’s public role. In short, Josephism represented an alliance between the state and Catholic reformers, both of whom acknowledged the central place of the church in society as a whole. Moreover, the Josephist model of the *pastor bonus*, who had a state-defined role and important moral, social and economic responsibilities, proved to be the dominant ideal for most of the *Vormärz* era.⁵

It is therefore from the 1848–9 revolutions that the Austrian culture wars directly stem, owing to the resultant split from the Josephist state-church tradition and the confirmation of significant shifts within the Austrian church itself. The gradual questioning of Josephism had started to become visible from the mid-1820s onwards, in the form of the Catholic revivalist movement. Scholars rightly point to the influence of Clemens Maria Hofbauer’s Vienna circle in this respect, but more decisive was the rise of an ultramontane orientation in influential provincial seminaries, such as Brixen, in southern Tirol. For, as Gottfried Mayer has argued, many Austrian Catholics initially welcomed the opportunity for renewal that the changes of March 1848 represented. Men such as Vinzenz Gasser (later

⁴ For example: Peter Horwath, *Der Kampf gegen die religiöse Tradition: Die Kulturkampf Literatur Österreichs, 1780–1918* (Berne, 1978).

⁵ William D. Bowman, *Priest and Parish in Vienna, 1780 to 1880* (Boston, 1999), 101–38.

bishop of Brixen), Franz Joseph Rudigier (later bishop of Linz) and Josef Feßler (later bishop of St Pölten) – all alumni of the Brixen seminary – felt that the church required a reawakening of the faithful and greater freedom vis-à-vis the state.⁶ Yet, as the ideological debates in the respective parliaments at Frankfurt and Vienna immediately took a direction contrary to that which Catholics had hoped for, their attitudes altered very firmly. Liberal attacks on the clergy and proposals to grant full civil rights to all non-Catholics placed the Austrian church in the most vulnerable position it had faced since the 1780s. Street battles in Vienna and Prague subsequently confirmed the clergy's outright rejection of revolution.

If 1848–9 witnessed the first moves towards Catholic political organisation,⁷ it also instilled a defensive, inflexible mind-set among the episcopacy and individuals who were soon to gain prominent positions in the church hierarchy. For these people, the whole notion of parliamentarianism was discredited by the descent into 'anarchy'. As for the Liberals, among whom a whole generation were initiated into political activity, the experience of revolution saw a rapid parting of the ways from the church.⁸ Though their priorities were constitutional rights and the nationalities question, church–state relations were an important concern as well. For rather different reasons, Liberals too had been in favour of releasing the church from the hand of the state, albeit on the basis that a disestablished church was a prerequisite for confessional equality. In practice, then, the potential common ground on the question of church freedom soon disappeared, due to the obstructionist stance adopted by clerical deputies regarding religious toleration and other basic constitutional issues.

The Austrian state's belated, but eventually forceful reaction to the revolutions was a return to the inheritance of the 'Counter-Reformation system', namely the vigorous assertion of the monarch's authority in close alliance with the church. As the more ultramontane church was unsure in which direction to go regarding ecclesiastical reform, but only certain of its condemnation of the revolutions, it had little choice other than to put aside its mistrust of state absolutism and place its faith in the guarantor of order. That trust was soon to be rewarded, for the coincidence of counter-revolutionary interests found expression in the Concordat of 1855, which guaranteed to the Austrian church all the rights it was due under canonical laws.⁹ While not totally renouncing the idea of a state church, in

⁶ Gottfried Mayer, *Österreich als 'katholische Großmacht': Ein Traum zwischen Revolution und liberaler Ära* (Vienna, 1989), 51–140.

⁷ William D. Bowman, 'Religious Associations and the Formation of Political Catholicism in Vienna, 1848 to the 1870s', *Austrian History Yearbook* 27 (1996), 65–76.

⁸ Pieter M. Judson, *Wien brennt! Die Revolution von 1848 und ihr liberales Erbe* (Vienna, 1998).

⁹ Erika Weinzierl, *Die österreichischen Konkordate von 1855 und 1933* (Vienna, 1960), 250–8.

the sense that it reaffirmed Catholicism as the official religion, the agreement nevertheless placed the church in a vastly more privileged position than pre-1848. Restorationist policy was reinforced by the appointment of 'fundamentalist' bishops. Between 1848 and 1867, there were ten vacancies in the eight dioceses of alpine Austria, five of which were in the hands of Emperor Francis Joseph. Two of the positions went to men closely involved at court: St Pölten to Ignaz Feigerle in 1851, and Vienna to Josef Othmar Rauscher, Francis Joseph's former tutor and the key player in the Concordat negotiations, in 1853. The other three went to the above-named Rudigier (1852), Gasser (1856) and Feßler (the latter in 1864, after Feigerle's death).¹⁰

The Concordat's publication was a major blow for Austrian liberal opinion, and many were disillusioned at the impact it would have on Austria's reputation in Germany. Initially, however, it was difficult to voice opposition publicly, given the restrictive nature of the neo-absolutist regime. Criticism was confined to private correspondence until the end of the 1850s, or, in the case of Franz Grillparzer, to rude verses about the men who had negotiated the agreement.¹¹ Dissatisfaction with the Austrian government only came into the open with defeat by Piedmont and France in the 1859 war, which led to the breakdown of neo-absolutism and the end of what the Liberal deputy to the Styrian Diet, Bartholomäus Carneri, termed the 'night, in which the men of darkness ruled'.¹²

In the early 1860s, the overriding liberal concern was with the confirmation of parliamentary government and a constitution, but the latter was not forthcoming until 1867, after the Habsburg loss of the Austro-Prussian war the previous year. Though the state had already permitted the unrestricted practice of Protestant religions via the so-called '*Protestantenpatent*' in 1861, it was only with the 1867 constitution that full confessional equality, including Jewish emancipation, was granted. Theoretically, the very terms of the constitution immediately nullified the Concordat, which had not envisaged toleration for other confessions. While its opponents consistently argued for the Concordat's revocation, Francis Joseph was reluctant to do so. The Concordat's concession of enormous practical influence to the church thus assumed major symbolic importance to the German Liberals who dominated the Austrian parliament for most of the 1860s–70s.¹³

¹⁰ Mayer, *Österreich als 'katholische Großmacht'*, 173–84.

¹¹ Karl Vocelka, *Verfassung oder Konkordat? Der publizistische Kampf der österreichischen Liberalen um die Religionsgesetze des Jahres 1868* (Vienna, 1978), 32–4.

¹² Cited after Edith M. Stöckl, 'Die Entwicklung der politischen Landschaft in der Steiermark am Fallbeispiel der Liberalen der sechziger und frühen siebziger Jahre des 19. Jahrhunderts', *Zeitschrift des Historischen Vereins für Steiermark* 84 (1993), 171–91.

¹³ Pieter M. Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries. Liberal Politics, Social Experience and National Identity in the Austrian Empire, 1848–1914* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1996), 117–42.

Restricting the power of the church was simultaneously an indirect means of criticising absolutism, as Liberals strove to ensure that the constitution had legal precedence over the Concordat. Or as the leading Upper Austrian Liberal, August Göllerich, put it in 1869: 'Away with the Concordat, away with this denial of all our liberties and rights!'¹⁴

The Liberals' programme in government strove to dismantle the church's privileged position, with key legislation in 1868–9 on marriage, religious freedoms and schools bringing church prerogatives under state control more fully than ever before. Further laws in 1874 controlled the external relations of the Austrian Catholic church with Rome.¹⁵ Sandwiched in between the legislation came the eventual revocation of the Concordat. After the declaration of papal infallibility in 1870, Austria declared the agreement no longer valid. It justified the move on the grounds that the nature of the other contracting partner had been fundamentally altered by the papacy's action, but this was a convenient way of acknowledging that the agreement had indeed become redundant. Significantly, this occurred during a brief interval of Conservative government from 1870–1, thereby demonstrating that the achievement of liberal objectives in Austria often came about as much due to external circumstances as to the movement's own strength. While recent scholars have legitimately stressed the Liberals' success in achieving their main goals (the constitution and the subordination of the church to the state),¹⁶ a limit had nonetheless been reached by the mid-1870s. Liberalism had never been a homogeneous movement and its divisions became increasingly apparent once the constitution was secure and the common enemy – the church – had been checked by the initial confessional laws.¹⁷ Greater divisions were evident over the 1874 law on external relations, which proved to be the last successful piece of church legislation.¹⁸ Further proposals to make civil marriage compulsory and to regulate the founding of new religious orders in Austria-Hungary were either abandoned or struggled through parliament, only to be vetoed by the emperor, who made clear his determination to protect the church as far as was possible. With their confidence shaken by the stock market crash of

¹⁴ *Ein offenes Wort an meine Landsleute. Von August Göllerich, Mitglied des liberalen politischen Vereines in Linz und Wels* (Wels, 1869), 13.

¹⁵ Full details in Vöclka, *Verfassung oder Konkordat?*, 51–90.

¹⁶ Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries*; John W. Boyer, *Political Radicalism in Late Imperial Vienna. Origins of the Christian Social Movement 1848–97* (Chicago, 1981).

¹⁷ Leopold Kammerhofer, 'Organisationsformen und Führungsschichten', in Leopold Kammerhofer (ed.), *Studien zum Deutschliberalismus in Zisleithanien 1873–1879* (Vienna, 1992), 23–44.

¹⁸ Christina Hagen, 'Die Deutschliberalen und die Kulturkampfgesetze von 1874' (MA thesis, University of Vienna, 2000).

1873, the fractious Liberals were by now reluctant to turn these issues into a show of strength. If the mid-1870s thus marked the end of the constitutional conflict regarding church–state relations, the ideological battles continued, sometimes in manifest, always in latent form, because the experience of the 1860s–70s created two polarised socio-political milieux.

Prior to turning our attention to some regional examples of these conflicts, it is crucial to underline once more that the Austrian culture was primarily affected the Empire's German-speaking regions. In the first place, this was because the franchise arrangements of the 1860s–70s favoured large landowners and the urban bourgeoisie. The latter proved to be the main beneficiaries, with the result that German Liberals held sway in the Austrian parliament. Accordingly, the struggle for and against the church laws had German politicians and clergy as the main protagonists. The situation was also particularly acute in these areas because the Catholic church was especially sensitive to the 'Protestant threat', which – for historical reasons – was felt to be of greatest danger among the Germans. Equally, the Germano-centric nature of the conflicts resulted from the fact that church–state relations were very much a secondary issue for non-dominant ethnic groups in the Empire.

For non-Germans, the main priority was always the achievement of national-political concessions (equal representation, language rights and so on), and strategic considerations often came into play here. In the case of the so-called 'Old Czechs', for example, their liberal instincts were curbed by the common ground with alpine Catholics on the issue of provincial rights federalism versus German-Liberal centralism.¹⁹ At the same time, there was something of a national element to Czech Catholicism, especially since the Enlightenment. This was evident in sympathies for the Hussite movement amongst many lower clergy, who came to play an important part in the Czech 'national revival' as a whole.²⁰ Such sentiments were often accentuated by the social gap between episcopacy and ordinary clergy in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia, where aristocratic, 'anational' grandees filled key bishoprics (e.g. Prince Josef Schwarzenberg at Prague from 1849 to 1885, and Prince Friedrich Fürstenberg at Olmütz from 1853 to 1892). While bishops in the Czech-inhabited provinces opposed the Liberal legislation and showed ultramontane leanings, the lower clergy frequently maintained

¹⁹ Otto Urban, 'Religion, Kirche und tschechische Gesellschaft im 19. Jahrhundert', *Études Danubiennes* 10 (1994), 109–16.

²⁰ Anna Skýbová, 'Die katholische Kirche in Böhmen und das tschechische Risorgimento am Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts', in Otto Dann and Miroslav Hroch (eds.), *Patriotismus und Nationenbildung am Ende des Alten Reiches* (in press).

strong Josephist sympathies.²¹ In effect, therefore, it was only from around 1890 onwards that a clear Catholic-Liberal split emerged in Czech politics.²² In Polish-dominated Galicia, where similar federalist strategies prevailed, the links between national identity and the Catholic church were particularly pronounced. This mitigated against direct attacks on the church, even if Liberals were certainly prepared to voice criticisms, particularly at the time of the Ubryk affair, when a mentally ill nun was found imprisoned in a convent dungeon in Cracow in 1869. More importantly, the conflict between Catholic Poles and Protestant Germans in the Prussian *Kulturkampf* proved decisive in creating a sense of solidarity with the church.²³ In any case, the comparatively tolerant religious climate bequeathed by the old Polish state meant that tensions were not so high as in western Cisleithania, where the church felt it had to defend a monopoly position.²⁴ So while opposition to the church certainly was voiced in the Empire's non-German regions, it never flared up into the major controversy that dominated alpine Austria.

COR JESU: THE CONFLICT IN TIROL

Nowhere were the Austrian culture wars more bitter or intractable than in Tirol. A multi-ethnic province (approximately 58 per cent German, 41 per cent Italian, 1 per cent Ladin in 1869), Tirol had been one of the first areas to feel the full force of Habsburg-directed re-Catholicisation from the sixteenth century onwards. Harsh, intense reconversion followed by the advent of missionary orders, such as the Jesuits and Capuchins, had turned the region into a veritable bastion of the Counter-Reformation. As late as 1837, the provincial Diet saw fit to expel several hundred Protestants discovered in the Ziller valley, which had been added to the province from Salzburg in 1816. The Tirolian '*Kulturkampf*' – understood as the conflict over legislation affecting the church – lasted from 1861, when the Diet

²¹ Friedrich Prinz, 'Die böhmischen Länder von 1848 bis 1914', in Karl Bosl (ed.), *Handbuch der Geschichte der böhmischen Länder*, vol. III: *Die böhmischen Länder im Habsburgerreich 1848–1918. Bürgerlicher Nationalismus und Ausbildung einer Industriegesellschaft* (Stuttgart, 1968), 3–235, here 103–23.

²² Jiří Malý, *Od spolku k moderním politickým stranám. Vývoj politických stran na Moravě v letech 1848–1914* (Brno, 1996), 161–72.

²³ Harald Binder, 'Kirche und nationale Festkultur in Krakau 1861 bis 1910', in Martin Schulze-Wessel (ed.), *Nationalisierung der Religion und Sakralisierung der Nation in Ostmittel-, Südost- und Osteuropa im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, forthcoming).

²⁴ Rudolf A. Mark, *Galizien unter österreichischer Herrschaft. Verwaltung – Kirche – Bevölkerung* (Marburg, 1994), 13–49.

rejected the *Protestantenpatent*, until 1892, at which point a provincial law finally resolved the question of control over education. This 'hot phase' of the Tirolian culture wars breaks down into two main periods, 1861–76 and 1876–92.

Taking up the slogan of '*Glaubenseinheit*' (unity of the faith) that had been politicised during the 1848–9 revolutions,²⁵ the Tirolian church's immediate concern after the end of neo-absolutism was the government's decision to tolerate the formation of Protestant communities. The German-Tirolian Catholic Conservatives, an alliance comprised mainly of clergy, nobility and property-owning farmers, possessed a comfortable majority in the local Diet. As elsewhere in Austria, the distribution of mandates was weighted against the non-German minorities, while Tirol was unusual in that comparatively large numbers of the peasantry were included in the franchise. Thus, Catholic Conservatives easily outnumbered the mainly Liberal Italian deputies and the German Liberals, the latter being concentrated in the towns of Innsbruck, Bozen and Meran. This provided the Catholic Conservatives with a power base more or less unique among Cisleithania's alpine territories, and that in turn enabled them to take on the central government.

Upon the announcement of the *Protestantenpatent*, Catholic Conservatives had immediately denounced it as being incompatible with provincial law. This led to a period of toing and froing between Vienna and Innsbruck, with the government resubmitting the Patent and the Tirolian Diet sending it back. A preliminary compromise was reached in 1866, when the government was obliged to give ground to ensure the cooperation of the Tirolian militia (a local defence institution formally controlled by the Diet) against the invasion threat from Italy during the Austro-Prussian war. Under this agreement, Protestant parishes could only be founded with the Diet's prior approval. Attention then switched to the government legislation of 1868–74, with the campaign in Tirol being led by the undisputed Conservative leader, Prince-Bishop Vinzenz Gasser of Brixen, while the clerical deputies, Albert Jäger and Josef Greuter, proved key members of the anti-Liberal coalition in the Austrian parliament.

Close on the heels of the anti-Concordat legislation came a central government decision in 1876, which confirmed the constitutional toleration of non-Catholic confessions in Tirol. This caused a shift in the Catholic Conservatives' priorities, as the second stage of the conflict began. With

²⁵ Hans Heiss and Thomas Götz, *Am Rand der Revolution. Tirol 1848/49* (Vienna and Bozen, 1998).

the cherished principle of religious purity denied, their concern was to maintain the maximum possible social influence: as in the neighbouring province of Salzburg, the battle for the schools became all-important.²⁶ Gasser coordinated the resistance to the liberal legislation and forbade clerical cooperation with the new school inspectors. His message was repeated from pulpits throughout the province and the influence of priests week in, week out proved a decisive factor in stirring the faithful to withdraw their children from schools when inspectors visited.²⁷ One such inspector was greeted by an angry crowd at St Peter in the Ahrn valley blocking the school-house entrance, baying that 'this Lutheran fiend' should not be allowed inside.²⁸ Although many peasant families were anyway opposed to compulsory, year-round education on the basis that it represented a diminution of the available labour force, the clergy's moral reinforcement of their position was crucial.

The Liberal fall from government in 1879 lessened tensions, but the Catholic Conservatives remained reluctant to give way until political and social pressures finally forced them to negotiate seriously. Faced with vociferous demands for Italian autonomy and internal criticism about the neglect of social problems from the emerging Christian Social movement, Conservatives agreed to a new provincial school law in 1892. This imposed the eight years of compulsory primary schooling envisaged by the original state legislation of 1868–9, but made exceptions for holy days and harvest-time. In practice, however, the clergy was able to maintain much of its control over education, particularly in rural areas. Catholic Conservatives dominated the new provincial school council, while no provision was made for separate teachers' salaries until 1910, with the result that priests continued to supply most of the personnel.

If the Conservatives' cause was ultimately defeated wherever it contested state legislation, the other side to the culture wars story was the victory achieved by political Catholicism in the battle for the minds of the local population. On the defensive ever since the start of the constitutional era, the Catholic Conservatives recognised that a potential reservoir of support existed not just in the countryside, but among the urban petty bourgeoisie as well. The symbolic centre for their programme was provided by the political instrumentalisation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, an essentially

²⁶ Harald Gnisen, *Ecclesia militans salisburgensis. Kulturkampf in Salzburg 1848–1914* (Vienna and Salzburg, 1972), 151–247.

²⁷ Josef Fontana, *Der Kulturkampf in Tirol, 1861–92* (Bozen, 1978).

²⁸ Cited after Joseph Gelmi, *Kirchengeschichte Tirols* (Innsbruck and Bozen, 1986), 192.

baroque cult that had been institutionalised as an official worship in Tirol during the wars of the 1790s.²⁹ Where the bond with the Sacred Heart had often been renewed in times of war (such as 1809, 1848 and 1859), Catholic Conservatives now exploited the crusading, patriotic rhetoric associated with the cult against the 'invasion' of liberal ideas. In doing so, they created a theatrical political culture in Tirol, which proved highly effective in winning the struggle in the extra-parliamentary arena.

The potential uses of the Sacred Heart had already been evident in 1859, when Gasser renewed the Tirolian oath of allegiance to the Sacred Heart as part of the war effort against the 'godless' Italian revolutionaries, Mazzini and Garibaldi.³⁰ After publication of the *Protestantenpatent* on 8 April 1861, the Diet responded with a declaration of *Glaubenseinheit* on 17 April. The same day, a certain Canon Hirn, a war veteran, wrote to the Diet requesting that the bond with the Sacred Heart be renewed in order to provide strength for the battles ahead. Processions and pilgrimages were duly organised, including one in Bozen, reportedly attended by 9,000 people. Numerous parishes celebrated the annual Sacred Heart feast-day with especial fervour, while the oath was officially renewed during a Conservative-sponsored shooting competition later that year.

With political life in its infancy and no organised parties, Liberals and Catholics used the symbolic nuances of public events as a way of expressing ideological positions, and the regional tradition of shooting competitions lent itself to this kind of activity. The Conservatives organised their competition in response to an event held by Liberals in Bozen just a few weeks earlier. The Bozen Liberals had organised a 'shooting competition of light' (*Lichtschießen*) in order to celebrate the *Protestantenpatent* and mark the introduction of gas-lighting in the town.³¹ They chose as the date 10 November – Martin Luther's birthday. As well as the shooting competition, the festivities included a solemn procession, whose focal point was formed by a golden candelabra surrounded by figures representing science and knowledge. Playing on the metaphor of light to welcome the 'enlightened' policy of toleration, Bozen mayor Joseph Streiter had made plain how the event was intended to demonstrate the town's technological and spiritual integration into the modern world, when adding a dedication to his contribution to the prizes for the shooting competition. 'The light

²⁹ Laurence Cole, 'Nation, Anti-Enlightenment and Religious Revival in Austria: Tyrol in the 1790s', *Historical Journal* 43 (2000), 475–97.

³⁰ Mayer, *Österreich als 'katholische Großmacht'*, 217–18.

³¹ Thomas Götz, 'Zwischen Stadt und "Region", Staat und Nation. Bürgertum und Liberalismus in Tirol 1840–73' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Regensburg, 1997), 261–4.

on our streets, which from now on will turn night almost into day, has something representative about it', proclaimed Streiter:

One calls to mind the spiritual light which has illuminated us this very year, the rebirth of the life of our state and the emancipation of conscience from every kind of unworthy confinement. Light is at the same time the daughter of heaven, through which our Emperor's noble heart deigned to give us and every citizen of the state freedom of thought and inquiry in the form of the *Patent* on 8 April this year.³²

Streiter presided over the opening ceremony for the inauguration of the gas-lighting, amid musical accompaniment and great rejoicing by local citizens. Literally the only dark spot in the day's events was the parish priest's refusal to illuminate the church tower, contrary to what had been envisaged in the original programme.

Such obfuscation was unable to blight the success of an event that clearly unnerved Catholic-Conservative leaders, who were outraged at the 'abuse' of the patriotic institution of local defence. Their press presented the shooting competition as a revolutionary demonstration, because it rejected the Diet's formal decision in favour of *Glaubenseinheit*. Claiming that Jesus Christ was 'the true light of the world', they organised meetings at rural shooting ranges to protest against the Bozen festival. Later that month, Conservatives led by Count Anton Brandis organised what was dubbed a 'shooting competition of darkness' (*Dunkelschießen*) in Lana, at which the Sacred Heart vow was renewed after religious processions and a mass. The organisers expressly forbade participation by anyone who had attended the Bozen event, despite pressure from the provincial governor to rescind this unprecedented stipulation. Not to be outdone by their opponents, the liberal press retorted by characterising the Lana meeting as the real example of unrest and danger to public order, because the Conservatives were agitating against 'the emperor's law'.³³

Particularly noteworthy is how these respective party agendas also linked into the contemporary German question. German Liberals in Tirol saw their reform programme and the goal of a constitutional Austria as an integral part of the reorganisation of the German Confederation. If Austria was, as they hoped, to play the leading role in that process, full toleration of Protestants was a prerequisite for gaining support in the North German states. By contrast, the Conservatives, who felt themselves part of a wider German Catholic movement, argued just as vociferously for

³² *Bozner Zeitung*, 26 October 1861.

³³ *Inn-Zeitung*, 4 January 1862.

a federalist Germany as they did for a decentralised Austria. Those differences found expression in the choice of flags to decorate the shooting ranges at the respective competitions in 1861: while both groupings hoisted the Tirolian and Habsburg banners, the Liberals added the black, red and gold of 1848 Germany, whereas the Conservatives raised the papal colours.³⁴

These basic allegiances and forms of political activity set the pattern for the 1860s, for Tirol had immediately been divided into two camps by the agitation in favour of *Glaubenseinheit*, as the Innsbruck-based liberal paper, the *Inn-Zeitung*, noted at the start of 1862.³⁵ Two years later, Liberals in Innsbruck mounted a festival to commemorate the five-hundredth anniversary of Tirol's union with the house of Austria. Celebrating the *Protestanten-patent* and the constitutional changes of 1860–1, Innsbruck mayor Carl Adam and his colleagues sought to portray their opponents as outdated, die-hard fanatics.³⁶ Catholic Conservatives responded by sending a formal address to the emperor, proclaiming: 'All the storms stirred up by the many-sided Revolution have foundered on the rocks of our mountains, thanks to the prince's protection and the people's sound faith'.³⁷

Conservatives maintained the oppositional momentum by celebrating further Sacred Heart renewals, whose symbolic incorporation of patriarchal authority helped legitimise their agenda and consolidate political Catholicism's social milieu.³⁸ In 1866, the oath of allegiance was sworn once more to steel the population against the threat of invasion from Italy, but Gasser also attributed to the renewal Vienna's decision to grant the Tirolian Diet control over the founding of Protestant parishes. When party politics became more organised after 1867, the use of festivals and religious celebrations diminished somewhat as political associations took over, particularly in the Liberal camp. Nevertheless, Conservatives still found the Sacred Heart an effective tool for gathering mass support for anti-government protests. A further renewal came in June 1870, as part of a three-day programme of prayers accompanying the first general meeting of the 'Catholic-Conservative People's Association for Bozen and District', reputedly attended by 15,000–17,000 people.³⁹ A similar demonstration of

³⁴ *Tiroler Stimmen*, 29 November 1861. ³⁵ *Inn-Zeitung*, 3 January 1862.

³⁶ Laurence Cole, 'Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland'. *Nationale Identität der deutschsprachigen Bevölkerung Tirols 1860–1914* (Frankfurt and New York, 2000), 56–138.

³⁷ Simon Moriggl, *Die Landes-Adresse. Zur fünfshundertjährigen Jubiläums-Feier* (Innsbruck, 1863), 7.

³⁸ Compare Norbert Busch, *Katholische Frömmigkeit und Moderne. Zur Sozial- und Mentalitätsgeschichte des Herz-Jesu-Kultes in Deutschland zwischen Kulturkampf und Erstem Weltkrieg* (Gütersloh, 1997).

³⁹ Franz von Zallinger, *Zur feierlichen Erneuerung des Bundes mit dem göttlichen Herzen Jesu am 24., 25., und 26. Juni 1870 in Bozen* (Bozen, 1870).

might attended the oath made in Bozen in 1876, to protest against the central government decision allowing the establishment of Protestant parishes in Innsbruck and Meran. An extremely tense occasion resulted and the government ordered large numbers of gendarmerie to control the streets and railway station. Mayor Streiter – less than happy at this Conservative incursion into what the Liberals saw as ‘their’ public space – felt obliged to forbid participating militia companies (*Schützenvereine*) from carrying weapons. In the end, the event passed off without serious incident, leaving the Liberals to gaze enviously at the comparatively vast popular support that their opponents could muster. As it transpired, 1876 proved to be the last major anti-government demonstration of its kind. The change from a Liberal government to Taaffe’s Conservative coalition in 1879 led to a lessening of tension between Tirol and Vienna, such that the next major Sacred Heart renewal – the centenary of 1896 – conspicuously sought to stress the imperial-patriotic nature of the occasion.⁴⁰

That later event was also a signal that the Catholic Conservatives had powerfully reasserted their devotion to the house of Austria, while continuing to put forward their claim to define what being German meant for political Catholics in Tirol. Along with the war experiences of 1859 and 1866, the culture wars thus also left their imprint on the process of ethnic differentiation within Tirol. The Sacred Heart manifestations between 1861 and 1876 possessed a definite national orientation, because invocation of the alliance originally sworn against the ‘godless’ French had always involved strong expressions of German-Catholic identity, and now took on an implicitly anti-Italian tone.⁴¹ For the German Liberals, by contrast, the culture wars seem actually to have diminished some of the potential antagonism stemming from the period 1859–66. While relations between German and Italian Liberals were by no means without difficulty, the overriding political priority for both groups in the latter part of the 1860s and early 1870s was building the constitutional state, which meant a greater degree of cooperation on constitutional and ecclesiastical legislation than has been recognised hitherto.⁴² This meant that it was only once the hottest phase of the culture wars was over at the state level that German Liberals

⁴⁰ Cole, ‘Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland’, 153–77.

⁴¹ Laurence Cole, ‘Nationale Identität eines “auserwählten Volkes”’: zur Bedeutung des Herz Jesu-Kultes unter der deutschsprachigen Bevölkerung Tirols 1859–96’, in Heinz-Gerhard Haupt and Dieter Langewiesche (eds.), *Nation und Religion in der deutschen Geschichte* (Frankfurt and New York, 2001), 480–515.

⁴² Thomas Götz, ‘Gratwanderungen – liberale Katholiken deutscher und italienischer Nationalität im ultramontanen Tirol zwischen Restauration und liberalem Konstitutionalismus (1830–1880)’, in Haupt and Langewiesche, *Nation und Religion*, 446–79.

began to focus their attention more exclusively on national issues. While the cultural conflict was comparatively muted in Italian Tirol (Trentino), the Italian Liberals' ideological distance from the dominant German Catholic Conservatives only served to reinforce their demands for national autonomy from Innsbruck, while – as indicated – leading to a measure of cross-national collaboration with their German counterparts. While that did not prove lasting, the really crucial development took place on the back of the combined impact of the Austrian culture wars and the new Italian Kingdom's hostile stance towards the papacy. These developments caused a major split in the Italian national movement in Trentino, which had previously comprised a broad coalition of patrician nobility, bourgeoisie and clergy. Many priests and conservative-minded laity now distanced themselves substantially from their Liberal colleagues, pursuing an autonomist agenda on the basis of an emerging popular Catholic movement.⁴³

Here too, as in German Tirol, the overall balance of the culture wars period was the eventual predominance of a powerful Catholic movement that adapted more skilfully to the demands of mass politics than the Liberals. Though the latter developed an impressive associational network and could still pursue their agenda in towns such as Innsbruck and Bozen, they were often reduced to the role of mocking bystanders when it came to mobilising people onto the streets. The dyer Franz Schwaighofer's absorbing chronicle of the period in the episcopal seat of Brixen leaves the lasting impression of someone struggling to keep alive the liberal ideals of progress and education amid a sea of Conservative supporters.⁴⁴ Schwaighofer gleefully notes when Conservative meetings are disrupted by heavy rainfall, yet the irony remains that it was not the expansion of the Liberal ranks, only the 'divine intervention' of the weather, that could keep the masses from attending the Catholic rallies.

MARIA IMMACULATA: THE CONFLICT IN UPPER AUSTRIA

A brief glance at the situation in Upper Austria allows us to widen the picture and confirm some of the common features of the culture wars in Austria as a whole. An ethnically homogeneous German-speaking province, Upper Austria's conflict was purely ideological, and basically free of the additional national connotations evident in Tirol. A further point of contrast is the timing of the conflict, which really only broke into the

⁴³ Sergio Benvenuti, *La chiesa trentina e la questione nazionale 1848–1918* (Trento, 1987).

⁴⁴ Hans Heiss and Hermann Gummerer (eds.), *Brixen 1867–1882. Die Aufzeichnungen des Färbermeisters Franz Schwaighofer* (Vienna and Bozen, 1994).

open after the laws of 1868–9, and this proves typical of much of alpine Austria. In Styria, for example, the culture wars also exploded post-1867, there decisively influenced by the death that year of the moderate bishop of Seckau, Count Ottokar Maria Attems. His successor, Johannes Zwerger – yet another alumnus of the Brixen seminary – immediately took a much more confrontational tone in response to the May Laws and encouraged his clergy to resist the new legislation.⁴⁵

If the timing thus varied, one common and distinctive feature of the Austrian situation compared to, say, Germany, was the dominant role of the episcopacy. While the latter's response to the liberal challenge was by no means uniform, those bishops who were hostile to the new legislation constituted the primary force in resisting the liberal incursions.⁴⁶ On their actions depended the degree and duration of the conflict. Though popularly based Catholic movements emerged as the conflicts unfolded, the laity rarely took the initiative during the 1860s–70s. The bishops, who were automatically granted, by virtue of their office, seats in the Austrian *Herrenhaus* ('House of Lords') and the provincial Diets, thus assumed a leading political role. Significant here was also the fact that many of the key figures came from humble backgrounds: Feßler, Rudigier, Gasser and Zwerger were all peasant sons from Tirol or Vorarlberg, who felt patronised by the Liberals and alienated from their social world. Nobody encapsulated this feeling better than the bishop of Linz from 1852 to 1884, Franz Joseph Rudigier, a pious but intractable character, who achieved the highest profile of all the Austrian bishops.

Continuing in the anti-Josephist tradition of his predecessor, Rudigier was an ambitious prelate determined to give the comparatively new diocese (it had been founded under Joseph II) a greater sense of unity. This he aimed to achieve by erecting a new cathedral in Linz, dedicated to the Immaculate Conception.⁴⁷ Drawing its inspiration from the papal bull of 1854, Rudigier announced the plan in early 1855. The bishop thus gave Catholicism in Upper Austria a symbolic centre, which was to prove a major rallying-point during the culture wars. If the subject and style differed from Tirol – the Marian cathedral was to be built in the Gothic style, in contrast to the baroque cult of the Sacred Heart of Jesus – there was a common

⁴⁵ Edith M. Stöckl, 'Die Entwicklung des katholisch-konservativen Lagers in der Steiermark 1861–1874', *Zeitschrift des Historischen Vereins für Steiermark* 87 (1996), 219–54.

⁴⁶ Jean-Paul Bled, 'Les fondements du conservatisme autrichien, 1859–1879' (Ph.D. thesis, Sorbonne, 1982), 219–41.

⁴⁷ Johannes Ebner and Monika Würthinger, 'Der neue Dom zu Linz auf dem Weg zur Kathedrale und Pfarrkirche', *Oberösterreichische Heimatblätter* 53 (1999), 21–45.

thread in the use of a dramatic, visual culture for the purposes of popular mobilisation. Liberals, by way of contrast, tended to rely on a literate, print-based culture of 'education' (*Bildung*), which proved difficult to employ on a mass scale.

The popular response to the cathedral project, which was to be funded solely by voluntary contributions, was highly impressive: at the end of the first year, about 97,000 members had registered with the 'Cathedral-Building Association' (*Dombauverein*), and contributions flooded in. Numbers fluctuated and indeed declined steadily, as might be expected of such a long-term project, but there were still well over 50,000 members throughout the 1870s.⁴⁸ Interestingly, the planned cathedral remained free of major controversy until the late 1860s. Certainly, there were those who questioned whether it was really necessary and doubted if it was realistic, as a rather defensively worded pamphlet in favour of the project indicates.⁴⁹ There was also lengthy discussion about the most appropriate site, while the eventual choice necessitated the purchase of several houses, which delayed the start.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, the project was not strongly criticised and it was noticeable how the Liberal town council cooperated in the foundation-stone-laying ceremony in May 1862.⁵¹ Indeed, Rudigier was so pleased at the event's success that he afterwards wrote to the mayor, effusively thanking him for the council's 'thoroughly well-disposed and energetic participation'.⁵²

Unlike in Tirol, therefore, the early 1860s were essentially conflict-free in Upper Austria, as both sides acted cautiously. Rudigier was not happy with the constitutional changes or the *Protestantenpatent*, but he was reassured by provincial governor Eduard Bach (brother of the former interior minister). The prelate adopted a watchful policy, trusting for the time being that the emperor would not allow the Concordat to be jeopardised. For their part, Liberals also saw no sense in confrontation. While they greeted the new changes, they realised that an antagonistic stance might be counter-productive. Like many of his colleagues, Linz mayor Reinhold Körner had been prominent in the 1848–9 revolutions, and had subsequently been obliged to withdraw from public life in the 1850s.⁵³ If that experience counselled caution, it is also true that the Liberals admired some of Rudigier's

⁴⁸ *Linzer Diözesanblatt* (1855–80).

⁴⁹ Florian Wimmer, *Der Dombau in Linz. Eine Schrift für das katholische Volk* (Linz, 1862).

⁵⁰ *Christliche Kunstblätter. Organ des christlichen Kunstvereins der Diözese Linz*, nos. 5–11 (1863).

⁵¹ Diözesanarchiv Linz (DAL) Dombauakten A/1 Sch. 45 Fasz. 18, Programm für die Feier der Grundsteinlegung zum Mariä-Empfängniß-Dom in Linz am 1. Mai 1862.

⁵² Archiv der Stadt Linz, Gemeinderatsprotokoll Bd. 1862–63, Sitzungs-Protocoll, 30 April 1862.

⁵³ Fritz Mayrhofer and Willibald Katzinger, *Geschichte der Stadt Linz*, vol. II: *Von der Aufklärung zur Gegenwart* (Linz, 1990), 111–19.

actual work as a bishop, above all his concerted efforts to improve priests' education. In any case, the Liberals held the upper hand, as they enjoyed a comfortable majority in the Upper Austrian Diet. With scant representation for rural districts – in contrast to Tirol – Rudigier was almost a lone voice in the chamber, and was unable to count on more than a handful of colleagues for support.

Open conflict only came as the government programme was implemented from 1867 onwards. The confessional legislation was undoubtedly the root cause, but a contributing factor to its spectacular unfolding was that Rudigier had shortly before accumulated two major grievances against the Liberals. He had been deprived of income from two endowments, because of legal uncertainty as to their precise status, and had also been thwarted in his attempts to use diocesan lands to gain a vote in the landowning curia of the Diet. Carrying these resentments, and outraged by the Liberal moves against the church, the tone of Rudigier's pastoral letters became sharper and more aggressive, as he instructed his clergy to ignore the legislation. Although Rudigier was equally concerned about the church's control over education, it proved to be on the issue of marriage that he made his stand.

After the marriage law had come into effect, the Ministry of Justice instructed all bishops to hand over relevant marriage documents to the civil authorities. While many Austrian bishops rejected the request, it was Rudigier who conducted the most stubborn resistance. Not only did he refuse to surrender any documents, he directly attacked the instruction in a pastoral letter of September 1868, in which he labelled the liberal laws 'lies'. Recently issued with a circular from Liberal Interior Minister Giskra to be vigilant about possible incitements to breaches of the peace, the conservative-leaning provincial governor Hohenwart intervened to prevent its distribution and alerted the state prosecutor to its contents. The latter formally arraigned Rudigier on the grounds of disturbing the peace and endangering public order. The bishop flatly denied the civil court's authority over him, citing the still extant Concordat in justification, and refused to appear in court. After rejecting several pleas by the new Linz mayor, Viktor Drouot, to cooperate, Rudigier was arrested. Put on trial, he was found guilty and sentenced to fourteen days' imprisonment – only to be immediately pardoned by Emperor Francis Joseph.⁵⁴

The affair became a cause célèbre throughout Austria and Germany, and represented a rare case of physical force being used. That the situation

⁵⁴ Gerhart Marckhgott, 'Der Kampf für das Konkordat und gegen die Maigesetze', in Rudolf Zinnhobler (ed.), *Bischof Franz Josef Rudigier und seine Zeit* (Linz, 1987), 119–31.

reached such a point was due to Rudigier's conviction as to the utter righteousness of his actions. He may also have calculated that the government would prefer to avoid a direct confrontation, on the basis that the authorities had already played it cool over inflammatory statements by other colleagues. In the end, however, the Liberals too believed they had to make a stand somewhere. Leading government member Ignaz von Plener felt that a hard line had to be taken over Rudigier in order to demonstrate that church officials were indeed subordinate to the state. Liberals could thus triumph in the basic outcome. The satirical weekly, *Kikeriki*, which frequently pilloried the bishop's actions, crowed that the court had proven how the law was 'not simply made for artisan youths', but applied equally to all citizens.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, the immediate pardon was for Plener a worrying sign of 'how little His Majesty agrees with the new laws'.⁵⁶

The impact of the 1868–9 laws meant that the battle-lines were firmly drawn, and this was immediately visible in the way the new cathedral became a rallying-point exclusively for political Catholics. At the end of September 1869, Rudigier consecrated the first completed part of the building, a votive chapel.⁵⁷ The newly founded Catholic mouthpiece, the *Linzer Volksblatt*, noted with satisfaction that the whole event passed off without the slightest disturbance, for worse had evidently been feared.⁵⁸ That this was so resulted from the changed attitude of the Liberals, who wanted nothing more to do with the project. Their paper, the *Tagespost*, virtually ignored the proceedings, while the town council ostentatiously held a meeting on the same day as the ceremony. With the situation now polarised, both sides immediately organised their forces more professionally, the 'Liberal Political Association' coming into being in 1869. It was closely followed by the 'Catholic People's Association', which functioned under Rudigier's protectorship and was led by Count Heinrich Brandis (an impoverished cousin of the leading Tirolian Conservative, Count Anton Brandis).⁵⁹

The next years saw an intense battle, in which the Liberals first received a temporary setback. They very briefly lost their majority in the Diet and experienced a short period of Conservative government in the Austrian parliament as well, which provoked fears that control of the schools might return to the church and education be buried once more 'in the deep grave

⁵⁵ *Kikeriki*, 17 June 1869. ⁵⁶ Cited after Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries*, 134.

⁵⁷ DAL Dombauakten A/1 Sch. 45 Fasz. 18, Programm zur Consecrations-Feier der Votiv-Kapelle des Mariä-Empfängnis-Domes in Linz am 28. und 29. September 1869.

⁵⁸ *Linzer Volksblatt*, 29 September 1869.

⁵⁹ Harry Slapnicka, *Christlichsoziale in Oberösterreich. Vom Katholikenverein 1848 bis zum Ende der Christlichsozialen 1934* (Linz, 1984), 30–41.

of darkness'.⁶⁰ Moreover, the tense situation was exacerbated by news of the pope's declaration of infallibility, which hardened the fronts further still. Rudigier had in fact hesitated in supporting the declaration, but more on the grounds of whether it was politically opportune, rather than for doctrinal reasons. Once the decision was made, he supported it with his customary vehemence, though he might well have paused to consider whether or not his original misgivings had been right after all, for it met with a storm of protest.

The ensuing debates immediately boosted the liberal cause, swelling the number of its supporters. The 'Liberal Political Association' boasted 1,857 members in 1870 and 2,117 members by 1871, while expanding into towns such as Ried, Steyr and Wels.⁶¹ At the same time, Liberals redoubled their efforts at ground level, seeking to spread their ideas via such means as the 'Upper Austrian People's Educational Association'. Founded in 1872, it had won 2,259 members within a decade.⁶² In response to the declaration of infallibility itself, Liberals cried that the state was in danger and demanded the Concordat's immediate revocation, while increasing their criticism of Rudigier.⁶³ Since the pastoral letter trial, Liberals had lost all respect for the bishop. He was now seen as a pure 'egoist', as Wilhelm Habison's critical account of Rudigier's tenure of Linz argued to great acclaim (the first edition of 3,000 copies soon sold out and was rapidly reprinted).⁶⁴ More worrying for Rudigier was the breakaway of dissenters in the form of the Old Catholic movement, which scored a noticeable success in the town of Ried.⁶⁵ Though the discontent was kept within limits and dissenter numbers dropped, the split nevertheless testified to the influence of dissenters and Protestants within Upper Austrian liberalism, partly due to the legacy of 'crypto-Protestantism' in regions such as the Salzkammergut.⁶⁶

⁶⁰ *Fest-Gedicht zur Verfassungs-Feier des liberalen politischen Vereines in Linz am 21. Dezember 1871, gewidmet vom alten Freunde* (Linz, 1871).

⁶¹ Kurt Wimmer, *Liberalismus in Oberösterreich. Am Beispiel des liberal-politischen Vereines für Oberösterreich in Linz, 1869–1909* (Linz, 1979), 34–6.

⁶² Karl Timmel, *Der Oberösterreichische Volksbildungsverein in den Jahren 1872 bis 1912. Ein Beitrag zu seiner Geschichte* (Linz, 1912), 14.

⁶³ *Die päpstliche Unfehlbarkeit vom Standpunkte der Politik. Von Dr. Franz Edlen von Benak, Advokat in Linz* (Linz, 1870); *Die Zivilisation, das Papstthum und dessen Unfehlbarkeit. Zwei Vorträge, gehalten im liberalen Bezirksvereine Ried am 15. Oktober und 8. Dezember 1870 von M. Kirchhammer, k.k. Gerichtsadjunkten* (Ried, 1870).

⁶⁴ *Die politische Haltung des Bischofes von Linz seit dem Jahre 1853 bis in die Gegenwart. Von Dr. Wilhelm Habison, Advokat in Urfahr-Linz* (Linz, 1870).

⁶⁵ Gerhard R. Pumberger, 'Dr. Joseph Brader (1843–1877) – Erster altkatholischer Pfarrer von Ried im Innkreis. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Altkatholizismus in Oberösterreich', *Jahrbuch des Oberösterreichischen Musealvereines* 135 (1990), 165–230.

⁶⁶ Franz Gratzner, 'Kryptoprotestantismus in Oberösterreich. Ein geschichtlicher Überblick', *Jahrbuch des Oberösterreichischen Musealvereines* 131 (1986), 17–67.

Throughout the heated debates, it is noticeable how Liberals were at pains to point out that they were not against religion per se. This reflected their core belief that the church should be granted the maximum possible internal freedom, while still being firmly subject to the laws of the state. As one Liberal from Gmunden stressed, 'we Liberals do not deny at all, that the majority of us are Catholics'. However, he argued that they were born as Austrians first and must therefore 'render unto Caesar what is Caesar's' by placing the state before the church: 'the Liberals respect every religion, but they want a free people, an enlightened people in a state based on the rule of law'.⁶⁷ There seems little reason to doubt that such claims were sincere, for there were comparatively few who really wished to permanently damage the church, even if some Liberals provocatively played on the clergy's worst fears by asking 'if Christendom will be destroyed by the confessional laws'.⁶⁸

The clergy continued to doubt the Liberals' claims and – much to the latter's frustration – exploited every available means to voice their disapproval. They asserted the validity of the church's political role, dismissing the suggestion that 'politics does not belong in the pulpit' in standard antisemitic fashion as the talk of 'Jewish journalists'.⁶⁹ The Catholic People's Association constantly stated that religion was in danger, and pointed to the lessons of Joseph II's rule, contending that so-called 'Enlightenment' would be followed by revolution.⁷⁰ Arguments such as these, together with the activities centred on the cathedral project, provided the foundation for an extensive press and associational network, which the Conservatives successfully constructed during the years of Liberal ascendancy in the Upper Austrian Diet. This left them in a healthy position to win a majority in the provincial elections for the 1884 Diet, which subsequently became a Catholic stronghold.

With the centre-left political space just as fractious at the regional level as it was in the Austrian parliament, Liberals found it difficult to compete in numerical terms in what was still – as in most of alpine Austria – a predominantly agrarian economy. In 1885, for example, there were thirty-four

⁶⁷ *Die Liberalen, Hg. vom liberalen politischen Vereine in Gmunden* (Gmunden, 1869), 6–7.

⁶⁸ *Wird durch die konfessionellen Gesetze das Christenthum vernichtet? Ein Vortrag gehalten am 16. Juni 1868 im 'Konstitutionellen Volksverein' in Ried, vom Obmann dieses Vereines Dr. Adolf Klim* (Ried, 1868).

⁶⁹ *Die Politik gehört nicht auf der Kanzel! Eine politische Volkspredigt von Gotthelf Bauernfreund* (Linz, 1870).

⁷⁰ *Die Religion ist in Gefahr* (Linz, 1873). German Nationals in Wels were to respond by commemorating Joseph II with a statue in 1884. See Harry Slapnicka, 'Das Welser Kaiser-Joseph-Denkmal und die Frühgeschichte des Parteiwesens in Oberösterreich', *Mitteilungen des Oberösterreichischen Landesarchivs* 14 (1984), 449–64.

political associations in Upper Austria with a total membership of 40,099; Conservative associations accounted for 32,026 of these. Meanwhile, the 'Liberal Political Association' had slumped to 913 members.⁷¹ However, it would be wrong to conclude that the Liberals were in an impossible situation, difficult though it undoubtedly was to make inroads into the rural electorate. More decisive was the fact that their brand of notables' politics (*Honoratiorenpolitik*) failed to adapt to the modern political arena. Ultimately, therefore, as the Upper Austrian clergy and laity watched the massive new cathedral (eventually consecrated in 1924) rising from the ground, they could reflect on the durability of the church and political Catholicism.

CONCLUSION: TOWARDS THE 'SECOND WAVE' AND BEYOND

As both case studies show, the hottest phase of the Austrian culture wars came in the 1860s–70s. While most commentators agree that the battles of those years were never as intense as in neighbouring Germany, the ferocity of the conflict should not be underplayed, particularly in view of the fact that in Austria the period left a deep and troublesome legacy – what is more, one which in its own way was more problematic than in the German case.

Certainly, the Austrian conflict came to a truce comparatively quickly, principally owing to the absence of a prolonged state-driven campaign against Catholics. In fact, the period of clerical-Slav coalition government from 1879 to 1893 even gave Catholics the chance to win minor modifications to some laws. However, these remained limited in nature and the main planks of the liberal legislation were never fundamentally threatened. Liberals could thus be satisfied with their achievements, while Conservatives retained the consolation of having gained power at the state level, in addition to having mobilised extensive popular support in the provinces. Yet while mutual suspicion remained high and disputes over issues such as Protestant burials in Catholic cemeteries or mixed marriages recurred at the local level, both Liberal and Catholic camps were soon faced with addressing more urgent matters, which soon pushed the church–state question down the agenda of Cisleithanian politics. Both sides needed to digest the impact of the conflict, but, above all, to deal with the question of how to consolidate their respective social bases once the initial phase of political

⁷¹ Wimmer, *Liberalismus*, 43.

mobilisation was over. Moreover, this had to be done during a period of economic downturn and within a changing political arena: 1873 had already seen the introduction of direct elections to the Austrian parliament (as opposed to deputies being elected by provincial Diets), while the electoral reform of 1882 lowered the tax threshold for franchise qualification.

Of the two sides, it was ultimately political Catholicism that succeeded in making the transition to a mass movement, surprising as it might seem that the establishment of a liberal state was so rapidly followed by the dissipation of liberalism as an effective political force.⁷² The reasons for this are manifold, though only the most significant can be highlighted here. In the first place, it soon became clear that the ideological disputations of the culture wars were very much a product of an elite-oriented political system, which involved no more than 6–7 per cent of the population, and in which both sides viewed cultural issues (understood in a broad sense) as fundamental. Liberals had been inspired by the notion of *Bildung*, which provided a unifying force for an otherwise disparate bourgeoisie,⁷³ whereas Conservatives had seen the struggle as a battle for ‘civilisation’ as they knew it.

Once Austrian liberalism had gained the constitutional state it desired, it soon lost its momentum, even if Liberals continued to pursue their goals after 1879 at substate levels, principally in the municipal sphere. Reluctant to address social issues, concerned by the rise of the Social Democratic movement and, above all, made anxious by the claims of non-dominant ethnic groups, the once powerful German Liberals proved unable to broaden their political base or to create a lasting, meaningful coalition with like-minded parties among other nationalities. The movement thus split into a number of strands, consisting of a liberal remnant and various shades of German nationalism,⁷⁴ while some of its more reform-minded sections transferred into either the Social Democratic Party or the emerging Christian Socials.⁷⁵ German Liberals did not alter or reject their core values, but they did move from an inclusive social vision towards a narrower rhetoric of ethnic exclusion, as national questions redefined their political priorities. Instead of broadening their conception of civil society to include the masses, they

⁷² John W. Boyer, ‘Religion and Political Development in Central Europe Around 1900: A View from Vienna’, *Austrian History Yearbook* 25 (1994), 13–57.

⁷³ Ernst Bruckmüller and Hannes Stekl, ‘Zur Geschichte des Bürgertums in Österreich’, in Jürgen Kocka, *Bürgertum in Deutschland im europäischen Vergleich* (Munich, 1988), I, 160–92.

⁷⁴ Lothar Höbelt, *Kornblume und Kaiseradler. Die deutschfreihheitlichen Parteien Altösterreichs* (Vienna, 1993).

⁷⁵ Boyer, *Political Radicalism in Late Imperial Vienna*.

revived their movement by focusing on a nationalist, and increasingly anti-semitic, rhetoric designed to appeal – in theory, at least – to all Germans in Cisleithania, whilst simultaneously excluding other nationalities from an increasingly defensive vision.⁷⁶ The German Liberals may well have continued to shape the terms of political debate in late imperial Austria, as Pieter Judson has argued, but this was something of an ambivalent achievement. By employing the melodramatic, immoderate language of the culture wars in the arena of nationality conflicts, German Liberals not only sharpened the tone of debate on the nationalities question, they also closed off possible avenues for compromise. At the same time, ideological polarisation in many places accelerated processes of national mobilisation and identity formation, being particularly striking in the divisions between ‘Catholic Slovenes’ and ‘German Liberals’ in Styria and Carinthia.⁷⁷ Arguably, therefore, the culture wars decisively affected Austria-Hungary’s nationalities conflict by normalising a theatrical mode of exchange in which apocalyptic language, the adoption of extreme positions and verbal – though as yet rarely physical – violence characterised the political culture.

If the long-term achievement of a liberal state based on the rule of law was followed by medium-term political defeat for the German Liberals, the reverse was true of their opponents in the culture wars. Catholic Conservatives had already begun to lay the foundations for a mass-based political organisation during the 1860s–70s, developing a widespread movement that soon numerically outflanked the Liberals. Nevertheless, political Catholicism too had to undergo a period of internal reflection and realignment once the hot phase of the culture wars was over. Throughout the area of Cisleithania most affected by the conflicts – that is to say, the German-dominated alpine provinces and the imperial capital, Vienna – lower clergy and Catholic voters became increasingly concerned with social issues, growing weary of the bishops’ obsession with moral questions. In Vienna, priests were among other things concerned with how to appeal to the growing working-class community, while in the provinces the clergy became acutely aware of the peasantry’s economic difficulties. When allied to petty bourgeois fears of the increasingly powerful socialist movement, these socio-economic concerns enabled Karl Lueger to reconstitute bourgeois politics in Vienna on

⁷⁶ Judson, *Exclusive Revolutionaries*, 223–65.

⁷⁷ Janko Pleterski, *Slowenisch oder deutsch? Nationale Differenzierungsprozesse in Kärnten, 1848–1918* (Klagenfurt, 1996); Andreas Moritsch, ‘Der nationale Differenzierungsprozeß am Beispiel ländlicher Gemeinden Südkärntens’, in Andreas Moritsch (ed.), *Vom Ethnos zur Nationalität. Der nationale Differenzierungsprozeß am Beispiel ausgewählter Orte in Kärnten und im Burgenland* (Vienna, 1991), 44–92.

a non-liberal basis, in the guise of the Christian Social Party.⁷⁸ In areas such as Upper and Lower Austria, Salzburg and Tirol, by contrast, it was a question of internal competition for leadership of the conservative political space, as lower clergy and peasants emancipated themselves from control by bishops and (often noble) party grandees.⁷⁹ The Christian Socials won political control of the capital in 1895, and made steady gains in provincial and state elections, prior to the spectacular breakthrough in the parliamentary elections of 1907, the first held under a franchise based on universal manhood suffrage. The Christian Social successes hastened rapid mergers with the defeated Conservative parties in all the alpine provinces bar Tirol (where the conservatives continued to fight on alone until 1918).

As Boyer has suggested, far from being the victim of constitutional change, Roman Catholicism actually appears to have been its main beneficiary.⁸⁰ Moreover, where Catholic opposition to liberal legislation in the 1860s-70s had been predicated upon the existence of separate, provincial Conservative parties, the new Christian Social *Reichspartei* of the 1900s had assumed the mantle of an Austria-wide political grouping, albeit the regionalist elements remained extremely strong.⁸¹ By accepting that the liberal state was there to stay, and in recognising that economic development could not be avoided either, Austrian political Catholicism adapted to the changing political arena by producing a synthesis between religious ideology and the demands of modernisation – what Boyer terms ‘the politics of corporate modernity’.⁸²

Yet the post-culture wars triumph of political Catholicism thereby left a weighty legacy for Austrian society and politics. Boyer is undoubtedly justified in pointing to the modern features of the Christian Social Party, in terms of organisation, electoral propaganda, press and associational activities, as well as its welfarist policies and infrastructural investment when in power.⁸³ Moreover, as Gavin Lewis has suggested, in rural areas the Christian Social movement helped persuade a sceptical and anxious peasantry

⁷⁸ Boyer, *Political Radicalism in Late Imperial Vienna*.

⁷⁹ Cole, ‘Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland’, 178–84; Gavin Lewis, *Kirche und Partei im politischen Katholizismus. Klerus und Christlichsoziale in Niederösterreich 1885–1907* (Salzburg, 1977); Rupert Klieber, *Politischer Katholizismus in der Provinz. Salzburgs Christlichsoziale in der Parteienlandschaft Alt-Österreichs* (Vienna and Salzburg, 1994).

⁸⁰ Boyer, ‘Religion and political development’.

⁸¹ John W. Boyer, *Culture and Political Crisis in Vienna. Christian Socialism in Power, 1897–1918* (Chicago, 1995), 60–110.

⁸² John W. Boyer, ‘Catholics, Christians and the Challenges of Democracy: The Heritage of the Nineteenth Century’, in Michael Gehler, Wolfram Kaiser and Helmut Wohnout (eds.), *Christdemokratie in Europa im 20. Jahrhundert* (Vienna, 2001), 23–59.

⁸³ Boyer, *Culture and Political Crisis in Vienna*.

that they should not fear economic change, and, indeed, could perhaps use capitalist development to their advantage.⁸⁴ However, all this was achieved by employing a thoroughly anti-modernist rhetoric, and it is here that the main continuity between Catholic Conservatism and Christian Socialism lies. Lewis demonstrates how Christian Socialists utilised a highly traditionalist language in order to reassure the peasantry that their values and way of life would be protected, even as the agricultural sector underwent major upheavals. In other words, adaptation to modern economic demands occurred in disjunction to cultural acclimatisation to modernity.

One visible manifestation of this was political antisemitism. Already during the 1860s–70s, Catholic Conservatives had routinely denounced liberalism as a ‘Jewish phenomenon’. Bishop Gasser, for example, flatly dismissed the liberal press as ‘Jews’ papers’,⁸⁵ and this religious-based equation of forces hostile to the church with Jewry was part and parcel of Conservative politics at the time.⁸⁶ Nevertheless, though the circles around the leading Catholic paper in Austria, the *Vaterland*, began to develop an antisemitic-influenced critique of capitalism during the 1870s, it was not until the rise of the Christian Social movement that an anti-capitalist, anti-modernist antisemitism came to form the staple diet of Catholic politicians and the populist press.⁸⁷ The consequences of this development for antisemitism in Austria in the period 1918–45 will remain controversial,⁸⁸ but one immediate impact it had was in cementing provincial hostility towards the ‘Jewish’ metropolis of Vienna, which was seen as the corrupt, depraved opposite of Christian Social agrarian idylls. As such, the uneasy relationship between the capital city and the alpine regions of rump Austria post-1918 constituted a permanent fissure in inter-war society and a destabilising factor for the comparatively fragile Austrian state.⁸⁹

⁸⁴ Gavin Lewis, ‘The Peasantry, Rural Change and Conservative Agrarianism: Lower Austria at the Turn of the Century’, *Past and Present* no. 81 (1978), 119–43.

⁸⁵ Cited after Oswald von Gschließer, ‘Der große deutsche Katholikentag in Innsbruck von 1867’, in Oswald von Gschließer, *Tirol-Österreich. Gesammelte Aufsätze zu deren Geschichte* (Innsbruck, 1965), 106–11.

⁸⁶ Cole, ‘Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland’, 195–218; Peter G. Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria*, rev. edn (London, 1988), 122–31.

⁸⁷ Alan W. France, ‘Kulturkampf in Austria: The Vaterland Circle and the Struggle over the Confessional Legislation of May 1868’ (Ph.D. thesis, Rice University, Houston, 1975); Boyer, *Political Radicalism*, 40–121.

⁸⁸ Bruce Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution. A History of Austrian Anti-Semitism* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1991).

⁸⁹ Ernst Hanisch, *Österreichische Geschichte 1890–1990. Der lange Schatten des Staates: österreichische Gesellschaftsgeschichte im 20. Jahrhundert* (Vienna, 1994).

Cultural anti-modernism was likewise evident in what might be termed the 'second wave' of the Austrian culture wars from the mid-1890s onwards, after the Christian Socials won control of Vienna. Political Catholics increasingly demanded a conservative presence in state institutions corresponding to their political power. These desires collided with an increasingly radical German-National camp, among which Protestant and pan-German elements were particularly influential. The disputes around the 'Away-from-Rome' (*Los-von-Rom*) movement from the 1890s onwards thus led to a revival of many of the old antagonisms.⁹⁰ Fights between German-National and Catholic student fraternities became a common occurrence, and were particularly acute in Vienna and Graz.⁹¹ Vienna mayor Karl Lueger's calls for a Catholic takeover of the universities heightened the tension still further, and led to a number of controversies, such as the 'Wahrmund affair' of 1908–9, when a university professor questioned the compatibility of religion and science.⁹²

In the final analysis then, the culture wars bequeathed an aggressive 'cultural anti-modernism' to Austrian society. The pro- and anti-church split established by the culture wars remained a key dividing line in inter-war Austria, with the difference that the Social Democratic Party had emerged since 1900 as the main standard-bearer for secularising politics, in which education was again one of the chief battlefields.⁹³ Whatever their subsequent success in playing the electoral game, the nineteenth-century culture wars in Austria had shown that political Catholics were fundamentally hostile to liberal individualism, while their acceptance of parliamentary mass politics was arguably more a question of strategic calculation, born of necessity, than political instinct – a matter of the head, not the heart. In the changed circumstances of inter-war Austria, with the authority of the dynasty removed and the church again under attack, a significant and powerful section of the Christian Social political elite regarded the 'corporate' element of their political synthesis as the solution to what they believed to

⁹⁰ Karl Reinhart Trauner, *Die Los-von-Rom-Bewegung. Gesellschaftspolitische und kirchliche Strömung in der ausgehenden Habsburgermonarchie* (Szentendre, 1999).

⁹¹ Peter Stütz, *Der akademische Kulturkampf um die Daseinsberechtigung der katholischen Studentenkorporationen in Deutschland und in Österreich von 1903 bis 1908. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des CV* (Munich, 1960), 10–14, 97–108.

⁹² Hermann Kuprian, "Machen Sie diesem Skandal ein Ende. Ihre Rektoren sind eine nette Gesellschaft". Modernismuskussion, Kulturkampf und Freiheit der Wissenschaft: Die Wahrmund-Affäre 1907/08', in Michael Gehler and Hubert Sickinger (eds.), *Politische Affären und Skandale in Österreich. Von Mayerling bis Waldheim* (Vienna, 1995), 99–127; Boyer, *Culture and Political Crisis in Vienna*, 186–211.

⁹³ Michael J. Zeps, *Education and the Crisis of the First Republic* (Boulder, 1987).

be the failures of republican, democratic politics. With a situation of latent civil war developing after 1927, Austrian Catholics ultimately proved more willing than their German counterparts to call parliamentary democracy into question. By 1934, the 'Austrofascist' clericalist, corporate dictatorship was fully in place, embarked upon a new, institutionalised form of culture war against its 'heathen' (National Socialist) and 'atheist' (Social Democratic) opponents.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Robert Kriechbaumer, *Die großen Erzählungen der Politik: politische Kultur und Parteien in Österreich von der Jahrhundertwende bis 1945* (Vienna, 2001).

*The uncivil origins of civil marriage: Hungary**Robert Nemes*

And so, if it is there that he is lying, quiet sleeps Count Buttler of Párdány. It is a good place to sleep, that peaceful vault at Dobóruszka. There is a stillness all around. Even in the forests there is no more singing; for the forests are gone. Only from the nearby swamps there is sometimes heard the croaking of the frogs: 'Clerics are crooked! Clerics are crooked!'¹

So ends Kálmán Mikszáth's *Strange Marriage*, which appeared in 1900. In the novel, the unscrupulous Baron Döry, in order to avoid a scandal, forces the young Count Buttler to marry his pregnant daughter. The young woman is carrying the child of the local priest, who, to make matters worse, also turns out to be an ardent Slovak patriot. Though Mikszáth set the story in the early nineteenth century, its anticlericalism is more a reflection of the bitter church–state struggles that dominated Hungarian political life in the 1890s. Tensions had long existed between the Catholic church and the state, and they intensified following the *Ausgleich* of 1867 and the subsequent rise to power of the Liberal Party, which governed Hungary uninterruptedly from 1875 to 1905. The spark came in 1890, when the minister of religion and public education, Count Albin Csáky, issued an ordinance calling for administrative enforcement of existing laws concerning the children of mixed marriages, thereby threatening non-compliant Catholic priests with fines and prison sentences. Both houses of the Hungarian parliament, the prime minister and his cabinet, King Francis Joseph, the Catholic hierarchy, and the Vatican soon entered the fray. The resulting culture war concluded only in 1894–5 with the passage of five laws introducing state registers, religious equality, official 'reception' of the Jewish religion, and, most controversially, obligatory civil marriage. In 1895 Hungarian Catholics launched the People's Party, which dedicated itself to overturning the liberal legislation.

No matter what their perspective, contemporary observers of the culture war agreed that Hungary's political, constitutional and cultural identity

¹ Kálmán Mikszáth, *Strange Marriage*, trans. István Farkas (Budapest, 1964), 361.

hung in the balance. *The Times* of London, for example, saw the culture war as a threat to the structure of Dualism and to Austria-Hungary's foreign relations.² Most historians, in contrast, have been more reserved in their assessment, frequently characterising it as an avoidable conflict brought on by mediocre leaders pursuing self-destructive policies. While acknowledging the vehemence of the struggle (two prime ministers would fall before the final bills were passed), scholars tend to define the culture war in negative terms. The culture war, it is argued, ultimately failed to dislodge the irresolvable 'issues of public law' (*közjogi kérdések*, e.g. the language of command and size of the common army) from the national agenda. Similarly, for Catholics the culture war should have been a call to arms, but instead it revealed the timidity of their leaders and neither the People's Party nor the later Christian Socialist People's Party (1907) would significantly alter the political calculus of Dualist Hungary. For liberals, the culture war should have been their greatest triumph, yet the struggle poisoned relations with the king and alienated many Catholics. Finally, while the 1894–5 laws obviously increased state authority at the expense of the church, they did not touch Catholic schools, religious orders or church funds. With some justification, historian Moritz Csáky has suggested that the conflict in Hungary was a *Kulturkampf* only in the broadest sense of the word; most scholars today prefer the term 'ecclesiastical-political struggle' (*egyházpolitikai küzdelem, kirchenpolitischer Streit*), a term that distances the Hungarian case from earlier conflicts in, for example, Prussia or Switzerland.³

This scholarship has focused almost exclusively on centres of political power and influence, and its methodology has stayed largely within the confines of traditional political, diplomatic and church history. There has been surprisingly little work done on the culture war either on the local level or from the perspective of social and cultural history. By examining the town of Komárom (today Komárno in Slovakia), the present study attempts to incorporate such approaches. Komárom was a small and otherwise unexceptional town, yet on several occasions it took centre stage during the Hungarian culture war. In Komárom, the culture war rapidly politicised existing social and confessional antagonisms, galvanising pious, lower-class Catholics against educated and propertied liberals.⁴ Both sides used a wide range of media, institutions and rhetorical strategies to rally their supporters, and a close examination of key events suggests broad

² *The Times* (London), 15 May and 22 June 1894.

³ Moritz Csáky, *Der Kulturkampf in Ungarn* (Vienna, 1967), 103–10.

⁴ I use 'Catholics' and 'liberals' as shorthand for the two sides in the Hungarian culture war. As will be made clear, these terms conceal diversity and divisions within both sides.

participation, multiple influences and a basic vitality in both movements. Church–state conflicts of the 1890s, in short, both exposed and helped re-define the underlying political realities of Dualist Hungary. While perhaps not polarising society to the extent that it did elsewhere, the culture war in Hungary nevertheless laid bare two competing visions of the place of religion in the national community and in modern life. The articulation, development and diffusion of these visions would be a powerful legacy of the period to later Hungarian history.

LIBERALS AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Nineteenth-century Hungarian political culture revolved around the twin axes of liberalism and nationalism. Hungarian liberalism has a somewhat dismal reputation: the Liberal Party fought with the political opposition (which opposed the 1867 settlement), oppressed the national minorities, fixed elections (in which only one in four adult males had the vote), wrangled endlessly with Vienna, and cracked down on socialism. Yet, as Alice Freifeld has recently reminded us, we should not to allow liberal Hungary ‘to be swallowed up in a historiography of disappointment.’⁵ Liberalism in Hungary, more so than in Austria and Germany, remained vibrant and creative, and maintained a lasting hold on the political imagination. The liberals’ faith in economic, social and cultural development was an important source of their appeal, which they fortified with a strong commitment to a unitary Hungarian nation-state, regardless of the fact that Hungarian speakers comprised little more than half the population. Particularly in moments of crisis, this fusion of ‘progress’ and ‘patria’ allowed liberal political elites – most of them gentry landowners – to mobilise significant segments of the educated and propertied classes.

Yet societal support for liberalism was fragile, especially when religious differences were taken into account. Late nineteenth-century Hungary had six officially sanctioned (‘received’) confessions (Catholicism, Calvinism, Lutheranism, Unitarianism, Orthodoxy and, after 1895, Judaism).⁶ While clustered settlement patterns characterised all these groups – Roman

⁵ Alice Freifeld, *Nationalism and the Crowd in Liberal Hungary, 1848–1914* (Washington D.C., 2000), 22.

⁶ In 1890, Roman Catholics comprised 47.8 per cent of the civil population of Hungary (excluding Croatia-Slavonia), Calvinists 14.6 per cent, Greek Orthodox 13.6 per cent, Greek Catholics 10.9 per cent, Lutherans 7.8 per cent, Jews 4.7 per cent, Unitarians 0.4 per cent, and other religions 0.1 per cent. Moritz Csáky, ‘Die römisch-katholische Kirche in Ungarn’, in Adam Wandruszka and Peter Urbanitsch (eds.), *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848–1918*, vol. IV: *Die Konfessionen* (Vienna, 1985), 282–3, 302.

Catholics, for example, were most strongly represented in the western and northern parts of Hungary, regions that had felt the full force of the Counter-Reformation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries – confessional heterogeneity was the rule throughout much of the country, particularly in larger towns and cities. To further complicate matters, confession at times coincided with nationality (e.g. nearly all Serbs were Orthodox), but it often cut across national lines. Quantifying this complexity, historian Zoltán Tóth has observed that there were sixteen ‘ethnic-confessional groups’ with more than 100,000 members; by this measure, Hungarian speakers alone comprised Roman Catholic, Calvinist, Jewish, Lutheran and Greek Catholic believers.⁷ It is worth recalling, however, that for many people, especially in the countryside, confession rather than language or nationality formed the basis of community and political loyalty. Liberal assertions of a ‘unitary Hungarian nation-state,’ then, could not fully disguise the great diversity of Hungary’s population.

Socio-economic divisions, which frequently overlapped with confessional ones, added a further level of complexity. Perhaps the most meaningful difference between Catholics and Protestants existed at the top of society, where the large number of Catholic aristocrats guaranteed the church a strong position in the upper house of parliament, while the sizeable Calvinist gentry dominated affairs in the lower house. If this ensured that both Catholics and Protestants were able to make their voices heard in the political arena, it also influenced the way their interests were represented and partly explains the near absence of the ‘social question’ from parliamentary debates in the 1890s. Yet this was an increasingly pressing issue: not only were socialist ideas making inroads both among the industrial working class and landless agricultural labourers, but a wide range of social groups, with Catholics strongly represented among them, felt left behind by urbanisation, capitalism and industrialisation. In the 1890s, many Catholic landowners, artisans and peasants would find common ground in their rejection of the liberal model of progress.

Finally, it is worth underlining that there was a clear hierarchy of confessions in the liberal nationalist imagination. Pride of place belonged to Calvinists, who, according to a well-established ‘invented tradition’, had repeatedly defended the liberties of the Hungarian nation against foreign absorption. Yet Calvinists also remembered the 1850s, when the Habsburgs had

⁷ Zoltán Tóth, ‘Die kulturelle Integration der ungarischen Ethnika in einer Kleinstadt um die Jahrhundertwende’, in Ferenc Glatz (ed.), *Études historiques hongroises 1990*, 6 vols. (Budapest, 1990) II, 191–223.

signed the Concordat and introduced an unpopular if short-lived Protestant Patent for Hungary. The Concordat, like all legislation issued during the neo-absolutist period, would later be considered invalid for Hungary, yet Calvinists could still portray themselves both as persecuted victims and as defenders of the Hungarian nation, while depicting Catholics as *Habsburgtreu*, beholden to Rome, and, by extension, less firmly committed to the national cause. Though these myths had little basis in fact, they formed a powerful undercurrent in Hungarian political culture and were repeatedly reproduced in novels, plays and periodicals. Such suspicions, of course, were not limited to Roman Catholics: to varying degrees, Lutherans, Orthodox and Greek Catholics were all thought to possess questionable allegiances to the Hungarian nation. Liberals made an exception only for Jews, largely because Jewish assimilation was seen as an essential means of increasing the number of Hungarian speakers. Particularly in Budapest, liberal leaders found many willing supporters for their programme among a younger generation of Jewish leaders, who in return demanded full Jewish emancipation as a symbol of their equal standing within the national community.

Confessional differences, however, were largely downplayed in the first years after the Compromise of 1867. Because the *Ausgleich* had placed the Catholic church in Hungary under the supervision of the Ministry of Religion and Public Education, liberal governments of the 1870s and 1880s exercised significant influence over Catholic affairs, particularly in the appointment of bishops. If Hungarian liberals (who numbered many Catholics in their ranks) were generally anticlerical, they largely pursued a policy of 'quieta non movere' towards the church. For its part, the Catholic hierarchy dutifully stood by the liberal governments, turning a blind eye to their nationalist educational policies and quashing an attempt to found a Christian Social Party in the 1870s. The lower clergy were less tractable, but Catholic communal life was surprisingly undeveloped: there were only a handful of Catholic newspapers and a limited range of Catholic associations. The hierarchy, moreover, often acted to downplay displays of popular piety. In 1889, for example, church leaders allowed state authorities to brick up a well in which a peasant farmer had seen an apparition of the Virgin Mary with the baby Jesus in her arms.⁸

When it came, conflict arose from the thorny issue of mixed marriages, which were increasingly common and by the 1880s accounted for more than 8 per cent of all marriages.⁹ This question had long divided Catholics and

⁸ Dániel Szabó, 'Mária kútja Szentpéteren', in Péter Hanák and Mariann Nagy (eds.), *Híd a századok felett* (Pécs, 1997), 281–94.

⁹ Csáky, 'Die römisch-katholische Kirche', 294.

Protestants; in the late nineteenth century, it gradually undermined relations between the Catholic church and the state. The source of contention was an 1868 law (1868:LIII), which mandated that, in mixed marriages, children should follow the confession of the parent of the same sex. Many Catholic priests, however, were allegedly in non-compliance with this law, and 'baptised away' children lawfully belonging to Protestant faiths. In 1879, and again in 1884, the government had decreed, without effect, that violators of this law were guilty of a misdemeanour and would have to pay a fine. In 1890, the Catholic Count Csáky, declaring that he did not want a *Kulturkampf* (the German case was repeatedly cited by all sides in Hungary), issued a ministerial ordinance to enforce compliance. Uncertain how to respond, Hungary's prince-primate turned to Rome for advice. The papacy counselled Catholic resistance, and it soon became clear that the majority of priests and bishops would not accept Csáky's decree. With tensions rising, liberals in parliament began calling for state registers, civil marriage and other reforms, and found strong support for these measures among the political opposition. The debate was soon taken up in churches, town halls and newspapers across the country. Neither side claimed to have wanted a culture war, yet given the opportunity, liberals and Catholics alike rapidly turned the dispute over the registration of births into a referendum on the liberal vision of progress and patriotism.

THE KOMÁROM 'DECLARATION OF WAR'

On 8 May 1890, the town council in Komárom, a city of 15,000 on the Danube midway between Budapest and Vienna, took up Count Csáky's decree, which had been sent to administrative and episcopal authorities for promulgation in late March. This should have been ordinary business, as ministerial ordinances were usually registered without discussion. Csáky's decree, however, sparked an unprecedented debate in the town council.¹⁰ The opening salvo came from János Molnár, Catholic pastor and abbot (*apát-plébános*), who delivered a scathing attack on the government's actions. The ordinance, he said, contradicted Catholic dogma and instead of creating peace, sowed the seeds of confessional discord. If it was not withdrawn, he warned, it would lead to 'an unfortunate culture war'. In the name of Hungary's nine million Catholics, Molnár asked the council not just to delay promulgating the decree, but to ask Csáky to suspend it until Rome had issued a decision on the matter. The following speaker,

¹⁰ Štátny okresný archív v Komárne (hereafter ŠOAK), Közigyelési jegyzőkönyv, minutes of 7 May 1890 meeting; 'Városi közgyűlés', *Komáromi Lapok*, 10 May 1890.

Calvinist bishop Gábor Pap, regretted the reference to a culture war and, in the name of Hungary's three million Protestants, asked the council to enforce Csáky's decree. Other speakers suggested that the town council was not the place to discuss what they considered to be religious questions. Yet the issue was an unavoidable one, particularly for Catholic aldermen. Jenő Keő declared that while he was both a Catholic and a liberal, he felt compelled to support Molnár's request, since he did not want to disturb confessional peace. Molnár himself spoke again, emphasising that if the laws of the state and the laws of God came into conflict, then he would not hesitate to obey the latter. The majority of the town council, however, was not of the same opinion, and it voted 27–13 against his request to delay implementation of the decree. Csáky's ministerial ordinance was to be immediately promulgated and sent to the police captain for enforcement.

The long, acrimonious debate over Csáky's decree ran counter to local political traditions. Town government in Komárom was resolutely oligarchic: half the fifty-two members of the town council were elected by 1,000 or so citizens; the other half comprised the twenty-six highest tax-payers in the town, the so-call 'virilists', who included merchants, property-owners, lawyers and a handful of manufacturers. The council in turn elected town officials: the mayor, head notary, police captain, and so on. Leaders of religious communities, including Molnár, Pap and Rabbi Ármin Schnitzer, held seats on the council, and there were Catholic, Calvinist, Lutheran and Jewish aldermen. The town council, in short, brought together local economic, political and religious elites, men of property, education and influence. National politics may have occasionally produced divisions – the town was almost evenly split between supporters of the government party and the opposition – but in local politics a high premium was placed on serving the 'common good' and on unity, and thus the council rarely put matters to a vote and unanimously elected town officials. Moreover, before the 1890s, the town council rarely addressed religious issues. A contemporary postcard, with its symbols of economic progress (the bank and bridge), authority (the town hall), elite sociability (the casino and park) and absence of churches, neatly captures the worldview of Komárom's town council (see figure 7). That this enlightened body could be rent by confessional differences was surprising and dismaying: 'This was not so much a debate about town affairs', wrote the liberal *Komárommegyei Közlöny* disapprovingly, 'as the scene of a nice little religious war.'¹¹

¹¹ 'Felekezeti harc a város közgyűlésében', *Komárommegyei Közlöny*, 14 May 1890; 'A természeti jog', *Komáromi Lapok*, 31 May 1890.



Figure 7 The landmarks of liberal Komárom, c. 1899. The town hall on the upper left was the site of the town's first civil marriage.

Yet there are good reasons to believe that the town's population would not have supported the council's resolution. The majority of the town (though not of the council) was Catholic, and as much as liberals may have wished it otherwise, religious commitments continued to exert a strong influence on most people's public and private lives.¹² Churches were responsible for attending to births, deaths and marriages, and most people attended confessional schools. One of Komárom's most notable traditions was its lively Corpus Christi procession, in which more than 2,000 people took part in 1890.¹³ In addition to popular piety, material conditions also separated ordinary townspeople from the town council. Once an important commercial centre, late nineteenth-century Komárom had become an economic backwater – a town, as a local paper uncharitably put it, 'that comes late for everything'.¹⁴ The town thus had a large population of economically

¹² In 1890, Roman Catholics comprised 56 per cent of Komárom's population, Calvinists 27 per cent, Jews 14 per cent, Lutherans 3 per cent and Orthodox less than 1 per cent. The same census revealed that the mother tongue of 93 per cent of the population was Hungarian, 4 per cent German and 2 per cent Slovak, though figure 7 suggests that many people probably spoke both German and Hungarian. *A magyar szent korona országának 1900 évi népszámlálása*, vol. X: *Végeredmények összefoglalása* (Budapest, 1909), 88–93.

¹³ *Komáromi Lapok*, 7 June 1890.

¹⁴ 'Egy város, a melyik mindennel elkésik', *Komárommegyei Közlöny*, 15 February 1893.

marginal artisans, journeymen, day labourers and shopkeepers – all occupations with numerous Catholics. Pious and often poor, these Catholics were potential recruits for a popular campaign against liberalism.

János Molnár, a forty-year-old, puritanical priest, would lead this movement. In the council meeting, Molnár had made it clear that he did not intend to obey Csáky's decree. Within two weeks, the police captain, responding to a complaint brought by Bishop Pap, charged Molnár with baptising and unlawfully registering a child belonging to the Calvinist church.¹⁵ The police captain ordered a hearing on the matter, but when Molnár refused to appear and instead wrote that he did not recognise the legality of the 1868 law, the captain summarily fined him 10 florins. Molnár's open defiance in this and other cases rapidly made him a hero to the lower clergy across Hungary, as well as a divisive force in Komárom. Other priests would defy Csáky's decree (more than 200 had been charged by 1893), but Molnár was perhaps the first and certainly the best known, in no small part because he bragged about his deeds in the Catholic press. Over the next few years, he would be fined no fewer than twenty-six times, and stories about his unyielding righteousness circulated widely. When one sympathetic judge offered him an armchair, Molnár replied, 'I want to sit where robbers and murderers await judgement. I do not want preferential treatment, only justice.'¹⁶ That he apparently pawned his gold cross and chain to pay his fines only added to his legend. At the same time, Molnár's baptisms widened the gap between Catholics and Protestants in Komárom. Looking back at the end of 1890, *Komáromi Lapok* decried these emerging divisions: 'Thoughtless people have thrown the fire-brand of confessionism [*felekezetieskedés*] into our society's tottering building', it wrote. 'Citizens concerned about this poor town's fate sadly watch this most evil among evils bring destruction to our social and public life. Is there anything more stupid and senseless than when people are measured not by talent and character, but by religion?'¹⁷

These wounds did not heal in 1891, even as the culture war became quieter both in Komárom and across Hungary. In the 1892 parliamentary elections, Komárom's voters returned János Tuba, a newspaper editor and outspoken liberal, and he joined a lower house that strongly supported measures against the church. The elections also steeled the resolve of the government, which now committed itself not just to enforcing 1868:LIII, but to introducing state registers, religious equality and civil marriage. Even

¹⁵ *Komáromi Lapok*, 24 May 1890.

¹⁶ Zoltán Nyisztor, 'Molnár János élete és műve', *Egyházi Lapok* 64/3 (1941), 34–5.

¹⁷ 'Komárom, 1891. január 1.', *Komáromi Lapok*, 3 January 1891.

Csáky, who had long searched for a *modus vivendi* with the church, noted in a memorandum of July 1892 that the government had to proceed, if necessary, 'against the clericals'.¹⁸ Compromise between liberals and Catholics no longer seemed a possibility.

This escalation of the culture war nationally set the tone for the Calvinist district assembly held in Komárom on 4–5 September 1892. The purpose of this event was to honour Kálmán Tisza, who had served as general superintendent of the ecclesiastical district for a quarter of a century. As Tisza had helped found the Liberal Party and served as prime minister for fifteen years, there was little doubt about the political colouring of the jubilee. A large delegation of church and local leaders met Tisza at the train station and escorted him through cheering crowds into the centre of town, which was blanketed with Hungarian flags.¹⁹ The next day, more than 2,000 people, many of them in Hungarian national dress, attended the festive assembly in the Calvinist church. After religious services, speeches, and the arrival of a telegram from the king, individual delegations lined up to pay their respects to Tisza. There were representatives from Protestant schools and associations, from both the city and county of Komárom, and from the local courts. When Rabbi Schnitzer warmly saluted Tisza in the name of the Komárom Jewish community, Tisza warmly replied: 'Our greatest goal is that every son of the homeland be united in patriotism', adding that 'the chains that remain from the past must be thrown off'.²⁰ A large banquet followed, at which the high sheriff of Komárom County raised his glass in the name of understanding between the confessions. The crowd cheered most loudly, however, when Bishop Pap toasted Count Csáky, making clear its support for the government's actions against the Catholic church.

The jubilee displayed the full repertoire of rhetorical strategies employed by liberals and their supporters in the culture war. Tisza spent the better part of his speech reflecting on his service to the church and nation. To Tisza, the two were inextricably linked: 'Whoever strives for the benefit of the Hungarian homeland', he said, 'at the same time promotes the good of the Hungarian Protestant religion and thus our church'.²¹ This invocation of the national interest, here linked explicitly to Protestantism, was a standard justification of the liberal cause. Appeals to Hungarian history served a similar purpose. Tisza claimed that he did not want to speak at length about the

¹⁸ Csáky, *Kulturkampf*, 84. ¹⁹ 'Das Tisza Jubiläum', *Pester Lloyd*, 5 September 1892.

²⁰ *Nemzet*, 6 September 1892; also see Ármin Schnitzer, 'A zsidók egyenjogúsága', *Komárommegyei Közlöny*, 20 January 1892.

²¹ For Tisza's and Pap's speeches, see *Sárospataki Lapok*, 19 September 1892.

confessional conflicts, but he did cite Count István Széchenyi (1791–1860) to remind his audience of the supremacy of the Hungarian constitution over Rome. This was an indirect and perhaps more ‘gentlemanly’ form of attack, but liberals in general did not shy away from invective and polemic. Bishop Pap, a veteran of the 1848 revolution and long a supporter of religious equality and civil marriage, used his speech to warn that the situation in Hungary was becoming much more dangerous. In the most inflammatory passage of his speech, Pap declared that the movement initiated by the lower clergy (men like Molnár) was now attracting the support of the Catholic aristocrats, the church hierarchy and even the prince-primate himself.²² This emerging political Catholicism, he explained, threatened not only the sovereignty of the state, but freedom, liberalism and even the family as well, since Catholic educators – and particularly Jesuits directed by Rome – wanted to influence the minds of future mothers. Pap was sure that this ‘reactionary’ movement would not triumph, but if it did, then Protestants would carry through the dangerous times with resilience and strength. Moving rapidly from possible martyrdom to probable victory, Pap concluded by underlining that Hungary’s best hope lay in Protestantism, the state and ‘freedom, progress and modern civilisation’. With some justification, the Catholic press branded Pap’s speech ‘the Komárom declaration of war’.

The Tisza celebration also made clear the decisive role of the press in embedding local events into wider debates. The national Catholic press loudly denounced Pap and, to a lesser degree, Tisza. *Magyar Állam* expressed its indignation and outrage in one story after another, delivering *ad hominem* attacks on Pap and listing twenty-nine children whom it claimed that he had illegally baptised.²³ In apocalyptic language, the paper used Pap’s speech to call for firm action: ‘The final hour has arrived in the Catholic camp, so that with all hesitation, all personal motives set aside, we begin the organisation of our war of self-defence.’ Showing the growing sophistication of the Hungarian press, one Protestant newspaper published a follow-up interview with Pap in mid-September, allowing him to respond to his critics and underline his peaceful intentions.²⁴ Yet sophistication did not preclude attributing apocryphal statements to one’s opponents or spreading rumours about them. Following the jubilee, the Catholic press seized on a

²² In the wake of the assembly, Prince-Primate Vaszáry issued a circular letter expressing his concern about attacks on Catholics. Pap’s speech was repeatedly mentioned in parliament, and even King Francis Joseph considered it to be ‘a very thoughtless attack’. Gábor Salacz, *A magyar kultúrharc története 1890–1905* (Pécs, 1938), 172–3.

²³ Molnár had conveniently provided the names. See ‘A komáromi hadüzenet’, *Magyar Állam*, 8 September 1892 and ‘A katolikusok igazai’, *Magyar Állam*, 10 September 1892.

²⁴ ‘Pap Gábor püspök újabb nyilatkozata’, *Sárospataki Lapok*, 19 September 1892.

remark supposedly made by István Tisza (Kálmán's son) to justify its call to arms.²⁵ The liberal press often responded in kind: in 1894, for example, a Komárom paper reported that the directors of the Catholic cemetery were indiscriminately selling old gravestones for reuse.²⁶ Whether reporting fact or fiction, the press was at the centre of the culture war; that both of Komárom's newspapers (*Komáromi Lapok* and *Komárommegyei Közlöny*) supported the liberal cause was a disadvantage for local Catholics, but one partly compensated for by the national Catholic press.

In 1890, many of Komárom's leading citizens had felt that the town council was not the forum to address religious issues; by late 1892, however, few had such compunctions. In December, the town council considered sending a letter of support to Sándor Wekerle's new government in Budapest, which, it was understood, would soon introduce liberal legislation in parliament.²⁷ Molnár vehemently opposed the proposal, warning that the new government would soon be robbing confessions of their freedom, closing churches, and banning the worship of God. As before, Molnár's words created a great stir in the council, and Catholics again found themselves caught in the middle. While some rose in support of Molnár, Béla Rudnay, high sheriff of Komárom County, declared that 'he, along with many members of this council, consider themselves good Catholics, but nevertheless in complete cognisance of their religious convictions, unshakable believers in liberalism'. Molnár, it seems, was unable to detach these Catholics from the liberal majority, and the council voted 35–7 to send an address to Budapest expressing its full confidence in the new government. Any doubts about the Komárom town council's allegiance were dispelled two months later, when it voted 32–4 to declare its support for legislation introducing state registers, official recognition of Judaism, religious freedom and civil marriage.²⁸

In a short period of time, liberals in Komárom had demonstrated their strength in the places that mattered: the town hall, the press and the city streets. With Tisza's jubilee, they had also demonstrated their ability to draw sizeable crowds. These gains had come at a cost, and a town accustomed to peaceful confessional co-existence increasingly found itself divided into two camps. For Catholics, the central figure was János Molnár, who had used the town council, the courts and the national press as soapboxes to pronounce

²⁵ He reportedly said that Calvinists should battle Catholics 'not from a Protestant perspective, but from the state's' (*ne protestáns szempontból, de államiból*).

²⁶ 'Megsértett kegyelet', *Komárommegyei Közlöny*, 7 February 1894.

²⁷ ŐOAK, Közgyűlési jegyzőkönyv, minutes of 14 December 1892 meeting.

²⁸ Ibid., minutes of 22 February 1893 meeting.

his opposition to Csáky's decree and to the 1868 law upon which it rested. Yet this was not a winning strategy: in spite of their numbers, supporters of the Catholic cause had little hope of winning votes in local assemblies and their views were rarely aired in the local press. Moreover, the crisis surrounding baptisms, which had first catapulted Molnár into the national limelight, was now overshadowed by the legislation the government was preparing. It was at this juncture that Komárom's Catholics embarked upon a new course of popular politics.

'CONFESSIONALISM, INTOLERANCE, WEAKENING PATRIOTISM'

The rise of mass politics in the late nineteenth century transformed the political landscape of central Europe. New political movements on both the left and the right used expanded suffrage, institutions of civil society and public demonstrations to mobilise large numbers of new voters and challenge liberal regimes. These movements also introduced into the political arena a more abrasive, creative style, which Carl Schorske has evocatively called 'politics in a new key'.²⁹ In Hungary, the restrictive franchise, the small industrial sector and governmental repression slowed, but could not prevent, the emergence of mass-based political movements. The rest of this chapter examines the degree to which the escalating culture war encouraged Catholics and even liberals to adopt new means of political mobilisation and participation.

For Komárom's Catholics, this had to be done outside existing institutions. As a skilled orator and writer known for his talent in capturing the language of common people, János Molnár was well suited to the task. In January 1893, Molnár collected 1,368 signatures on a petition spelling out the Catholics' opposition to civil marriage and calling on parliament to reject it. This was one of many similar efforts across the country; in this case it can also be seen as a popular repudiation of the town council's resolutions described above. Predictably, *Komáromi Lapok* swiftly dismissed the petition, noting that its signatories included 'men, women, boys and girls alike', who, with few exceptions, are 'from the ranks of commoners'.³⁰ The liberal paper's class bias and disdainful tone towards pious Catholics were unsurprising. Still, it was one thing to dismiss a petition, but how would liberals respond when 5,000 commoners gathered in Komárom in defence of the Catholic church?

²⁹ Carl Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna* (New York, 1981), 116–80.

³⁰ *Komáromi Lapok*, 14 January 1893.

Though *Katholikentage* had been a visible part of German and Austrian Catholicism for years, there was no tradition of them in Hungary. In February 1893, however, Catholics in Sopron held a rally that drew thousands of believers. Inspired by this example, Molnár announced his intention to hold a mass meeting in Komárom and applied for permission from the town authorities. The assembly was set for 23 April, ostensibly to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of Pope Leo XIII becoming a bishop, but it was widely understood that this would be a protest against the government and its legislation. Without explicitly denying Catholics the right to assemble, the liberal authorities in turn used administrative measures to minimise the size and significance of the Komárom assembly. The first move came from Budapest: in early April, the interior minister announced a ban on all assemblies connected to religious services. Apparently, it had become common for priests to urge their parishioners to remain after mass, where they heard speakers denounce the government and often Jews as well.³¹ Although the regulation did not directly interfere with Molnár's meeting (which was not connected to regular services), it indicated clearly Budapest's opposition to Catholic gatherings. In Komárom, the town nevertheless offered Molnár Széna tér (Haymarket Square) for the rally. When local residents loudly protested this decision, raising concerns about public safety and health, the council rapidly yielded to these requests.³² Molnár was thus forced to hold the assembly well outside town on the property of a sympathetic landowner. Meanwhile, the local papers did little to promote or even describe the coming assembly; that *Komáromi Lapok* published the police captain's warning about cholera a week before the event may not have been coincidental.³³ *Komárommegyei Közlöny* was much less subtle: in a front-page editorial on the assembly, it warned against 'agitation' that promised to 'spread the seeds of confessional hatred'.³⁴

In spite of these obstacles, the Komárom Catholic Day assembly appears to have been a success. Many of the 5,000 people in attendance had come from surrounding towns and villages. There were about fifty priests and a handful of aristocrats and intellectuals (including members of the Budapest Catholic Circle), but most were ordinary townsmen and peasants.³⁵ Masses

³¹ Péter Hanák, 'Az egyházpolitikai küzdelem', in Hanák (ed.), *Magyarország története 1890–1918*, 2 vols. (Budapest, 1988), I, 89.

³² *Komáromi Lapok*, 1 April 1893.

³³ Ibid., 15 April 1893. The Hungarian government would later use an unfounded threat of cholera to force Catholics in Szabadka (today Subotica in Serbia) to postpone their assembly.

³⁴ 'Nagygyűlés', *Komárommegyei Közlöny*, 12 April 1893.

³⁵ Organisers allowed but did not encourage women to attend the assembly by ordering that one woman was to be admitted only after ten men had entered. This suggests that Catholics, like their

were heard in town from six o'clock in the morning, and the meeting started at ten. The Hungarian tricolour, papal flags and a portrait of Leo XIII decorated the temporary hall, and the meeting opened with the Komárom Catholic Choir's performance of 'Szózat', a patriotic song. A daunting line-up of ten speakers followed, but the crowd's enthusiasm, according to the Catholic papers, never wavered over the course of the five-hour meeting. Count Miklós Moricz Esterházy, a future leader of the People's Party, spoke first, comparing the Catholics who had gathered to early Christians. Molnár next read telegrams destined for the pope, the king, the prince-primate and Bishop Zalka of Győr, a hard-line opponent of the government's legislation who had earlier called for a ban on all mixed marriages. Count László Szapáry then spoke on church-state relations, winning cheers with the slogan 'a free church in a free state' and by asserting the church's fundamental role in upholding the social order. Later speakers took up the issues of civil marriage, education, the press and the duties of women. The assembly then passed nine resolutions, which reiterated its opposition to the government's legislation and called for further Catholic assemblies.

In the eyes of the Catholic press, the Komárom Catholic rally was an important turning-point. Catholics had been on the defensive, but Catholicism was now waking 'as if from a long daydream'.³⁶ The large, diverse audience was taken as proof of Catholics' devotion, unity and, at least in the eyes of *Magyar Állam*, new-found militancy. The humble origins of many of the attendees was no cause for shame: one paper reported that the high point of the assembly had come when a simple farmer stood up and shouted, 'The patron of Hungary used to be the Blessed Virgin Mary!'³⁷ His outburst was greeted with minutes of uninterrupted applause. The audience also responded positively to the assembly's bleak depiction of modern life, as one speaker after another warned of the dangers of widespread irreligion (*vallástalanság*), secular education and rampant materialism. Taking aim at capitalism and Jews, Ottokár Prohászka said that 'the entire world stands under the rule of money', explaining that under capitalism usurious Jews had replaced the feudal lords of old. Only a united Catholic movement offered protection from these developments; to great acclaim, Prohászka called for the formation of Catholic associations for intellectuals, workers and peasants, and for the founding of a Catholic political party. Thus unified, Catholics would be able to defend themselves against the manifold

liberal counterparts, had reservations about allowing women to play a visible role in public life.

'A komáromi katolikus nagygyűlés', *Magyar Néplap*, 7 April 1893.

³⁶ *Katolikus Szemle*, 7/3 (1893), 452; for a similar metaphor, see *Religio*, 26 April 1893.

³⁷ 'A II. magyar kath. nagygyűlés', *Magyar Állam*, 26 April 1893.

ill effects of liberalism and, in the future, be ready to meet the challenge of socialism as well.

The Catholic rally revealed the outlines of Hungary's incipient political Catholicism. Continuous organisational activity was at its centre. Fortified in September 1893 by Leo XIII's encyclical *Constanti Hungarorum*, Catholics continued to hold assemblies, launch newspapers and form associations. These activities led to the large Catholic Day celebration in Budapest on 16 January 1894, which again provided a platform for lay and clerical leaders to voice their opposition to the liberal legislation; to call on the faithful to vote for reliable, Catholic candidates; to profess their loyalty to king and nation; and to warn that socialism, immorality and population decline would surely follow on the heels of civil marriage.³⁸ In this respect, the gathering in Komárom was an important link in the chain leading to the formation of the People's Party in late 1895.³⁹ It also demonstrated how attacks on the modern world could shore up the unsteady alliance of social groups in the Catholic camp. For the aristocratic leadership, political Catholicism promised a return to a society built on paternalism and deference; for the rank-and-file, it offered a populist attack on capitalism and urban culture. As Prohászka's speech in Komárom suggested, antisemitism was an important (if often implicit) element of these populist attacks on modern, liberal society. Yet Catholics also showed their readiness to borrow 'liberal' organisational techniques – associations, newspapers and even a political party – to achieve their ends.

Finally, the Komárom assembly suggests a particularly Catholic conception of national loyalty. In his speech, Esterházy took pains to deny charges that the Catholic movement was weakening the nation, and both Catholics and liberals employed a strikingly similar repertoire of patriotic symbols, including flags, the anthem, national costumes and telegrams to the king. Yet Catholics also held that the nation could not be separated from its Christian roots, and thus added religious and papal symbols to the mix. To liberals, this was subversive and politically disloyal; to Catholics, however, a national loyalty built on Christianity was compatible with supranational allegiances (to the king and pope). This emphasis on faith rather than on language or culture allowed for a conception of Hungarian patriotism that embraced non-Hungarian speakers. When thousands of elderly Slovaks took part in a Catholic rally in northern Hungary in 1894, Count Nándor Zichy, founder of the People's Party, spoke of 'the idea of the Hungarian

³⁸ Miklós Móricz Esterházy and Nándor Zichy (eds.), *A katolikus nagygyűlés* (Budapest, 1894).

³⁹ Dániel Szabó, 'A Néppárt megalakulása', *Történelmi Szemle* 20/2 (1977), 169–208.

kingdom, which unites every people [*egyesít minden fajt*] and confession, and to which, no matter how different people are, we can all be devoted with equal piety and love'.⁴⁰ This relatively tolerant view, however, was not widely held, even among Catholics. Writing in 1896, Molnár instead suggested that the People's Party should use 'friendly means and love' to win over the non-Hungarian nationalities to the idea of the Hungarian nation-state, so that they 'would become Hungarian-speaking Hungarians'.⁴¹ On this last point at least, many Catholics in Hungary were not so different from the liberals they so vociferously opposed.

Such subtleties were lost on the liberal press, whose attitude towards the Catholic assembly in Komárom was neatly summarised in an editorial entitled 'Confessionalism, intolerance, weakening patriotism'.⁴² Written by János Domány, Komárom's town clerk (*főjegyző*), the editorial presented a litany of liberal attacks on political Catholicism. To Domány, Catholic speakers were guilty of hypocrisy and intolerance: they demanded equality yet opposed Jewish reception, they spoke of the oppression of Catholicism but 'swam in the light of power's glory', they protested the backwardness and misery of the common people, but offered 'only the restoration of medieval, retrograde thinking, i.e. servitude'. This was a polemic plain and simple, yet one that reinforced purported connections between 'ultramontanes' and hidden power, oppression and backwardness.

The most damning liberal critique, however, was that political Catholicism posed a grave danger to an already beleaguered Hungarian nation. By not recognising state authority over the church, Catholics had forgotten the patriotic dictum, 'the homeland before everything' (*a haza minden előtt*). Implicit in this charge was the belief that loyalty could *not* be divided between Hungary, Vienna and Rome. Moreover, Catholics were accused not just of creating divisions among Hungarian speakers, but of fanning the flames of non-Hungarian national movements. Writing in *Pesti Hírlap*, liberal publicist Gusztáv Beksics stated that the greatest danger was that 'the Daco-Romanians, Pan-Slavs, etc. will copy the example of the Komárom assembly and, under the pretence of protesting against civil marriage and civil registers, will likewise protest in their assemblies against the Hungarian state idea'.⁴³ Indeed, the interior minister had justified his ban on assemblies connected to religious services on such grounds. Leaving no doubts about their own commitment to the national cause, Komárom liberals

⁴⁰ Nándor Zichy, 'Időszaki szemle', *Katholikus Szemle*, 8/3 (1894), 449.

⁴¹ Csáky, 'Die römisch-katholische Kirche', 286.

⁴² János Domány, 'Felekezetiesség, türelmetlenség, gyengülő hazafiság', *Komáromi Lapok*, 29 April 1893.

⁴³ Gusztáv Beksics, 'Ultramontán tüntetés', *Pesti Hírlap*, 25 April 1893.

founded a new cultural association dedicated to promoting the Hungarian language among the county's German and Slovak population; at the end of the year, the papers bragged that several village churches were for the first time holding their sermons in Hungarian.⁴⁴

In 1893, Komárom's newspapers had scorned the Catholic Day rally; by 1894 they were arguing that liberals too had to demonstrate their strength in the streets. Though keen observers could already see that the government's legislation would eventually be pushed through parliament and accepted by a reluctant Francis Joseph, the outcome of the culture war for most contemporaries was still uncertain. In language that echoed the Catholic press, *Komáromi Lapok* chided liberals for their inactivity and for impassively watching 'their opponents' military demonstrations'.⁴⁵ Remarkably, the paper credited the Catholic assemblies and petition campaigns as signs of a real public opinion, which it contrasted with the liberal side's 'artificial official public opinion [*csinált hivatalos közvélemény*], which the high sheriffs have produced at the government's order'. This was a striking concession, since it suggested that Catholics possessed greater legitimacy in Komárom. A liberal assembly, the paper concluded, would document to the country that Komárom has 'believers not only in ultramontanism, but also in liberalism, who will bravely accept battle in the hope of victory'. The announcement that liberals were organising a national assembly in Budapest gave impetus to the effort, as did a liberal rally held in Nagy-Igmánd, a small town in Komárom County.⁴⁶ Town officials, who had shunned the Catholic assembly, soon endorsed the idea.

The Komárom liberal assembly was held on 25 February 1894. János Molnár had urged Catholics to stay away, yet Catholics apparently comprised the largest part of the 1,000 or more men in attendance. Though most were landowners or urban elites, the liberal press was at pains to point out that ordinary farmers were present as well. The first speaker was Jenő Fittler, Catholic editor of *Komárommegyei Közlöny*, who read the assembly's resolutions, which, among other things, called for confessional peace in the name of the 'unitary Hungarian national state'.⁴⁷ For liberals, national loyalty trumped all other forms of allegiance, as the speaker Dani Csepi explained: 'Hungary can survive without Protestants, Jews or Roman

⁴⁴ The Komárommegyei és Városi Közművelődési Egyesület was founded in March 1893 with 207 members. The county was already 87 per cent Hungarian-speaking. 'Kulturmozgalom', *Komárommegyei Közlöny*, 22 March 1893 and 'A ó esztendő', *ibid.*, 3 January 1894.

⁴⁵ 'Vagy-vagy', *Komáromi Lapok*, 27 January 1894.

⁴⁶ 'Nagy-Igmánd – Komárom', *Komárommegyei Közlöny*, 21 February 1894; 'Sorakozás', *Tata-Tóvárosi Híradó*, 24 February 1894.

⁴⁷ On the assembly, see 'A komáromi népgyűlés', *Komárommegyei Közlöny*, 28 February 1894.

Catholics, but it cannot last a second without Hungarians.' Civil marriage, state registers and religious equality, he argued, would revive the nation: 'I see channels opening, in which absorption, the general procedures of Magyarisation, will carry new life-blood to the heart of the Hungarian nation.' Clearly placing the blame on the Catholics, Csepi raised the spectre of a 'fraternal war' between Hungarians if the culture war continued. One week later, more than 400 representatives of Komárom city and county took part in the liberal demonstration in Budapest. Resolutions were passed in favour of the government's legislation, wreaths were laid at the graves of leading liberals, and as many as 100,000 people gathered to watch the liberals parade through the streets. According to the local press, the Komárom delegation won especially loud cheers for its enthusiastic patriotism and grand Hungarian costumes.⁴⁸ Hungarian liberalism may have rested on a narrow social base, but in times of crisis liberals were able to fill the streets with their supporters. Liberalism would never be 'popular', but its use of national symbols and language allowed it to isolate Catholics at crucial moments in the culture war.

To what degree, then, had the culture war rewritten the rules of politics in Komárom? On the surface, little had changed: no town officers or aldermen had lost their posts, and the local press had not wavered in its liberal convictions. Yet politics had spilled into churches, streets and schools, and the rhetorical scars left by the culture war would not rapidly heal. While some speakers and writers had attempted to resolve matters according to gentlemanly political traditions, their voices were often drowned out in the antisemitic or anticlerical philippics of their less tolerant colleagues. Exaggerated threats, rumours and *ad hominem* attacks were common means of discrediting one's opponents and justifying one's own position. Moreover, with its widespread mobilisation, the Komárom culture war also raised questions about the legitimacy of local political structures. The Komárom Catholic rally merits special attention here: its resolutions broke no new ground, yet by helping *Katholikentage* take root in Hungary, the Komárom rally suggested, however indirectly, a different model of political participation. By welcoming 'the people' to take part in what was both a religious festival and a political demonstration, the Catholic leadership offered a non-socialist alternative to the dominant *Honoratiorenpolitik*. The goal was not to broaden the limited franchise, but to energise and activate Catholics in the realm of civil society, an arena formerly neglected by the church. Here they met with opposition from liberal political elites, who used

⁴⁸ *Komáromi Lapok*, 10 March 1894; *Komárommegyei Közlöny*, 7 and 14 March 1894.

administrative measures and local media to hinder Catholic activity. In the wake of the culture war, it would be difficult for the town council to claim that it governed strictly according to the rule of law, that it was above party or confession, or that it represented fairly the interests of the majority of Komárom's population. This was made clear by the repeated intrusion of confessional issues into town politics – in the budget debates of 1894, in János Molnár's request for time off (to work for the People's Party) in early 1895, and in local elections the same year.⁴⁹ Confessional divisions had become a feature of political life in Komárom.

The struggles in Komárom were above all local ones, pitting the recalcitrant János Molnár and his devout followers against a liberal town council backed up by the police and bolstered by the press. Yet on at least three occasions (Molnár's rejection of Csáky's decree, the Tisza jubilee and the Catholic rally), events in Komárom took on national significance. Speakers were aware of this, and frequently addressed their words to larger, fictive audiences (Molnár's 'nine million Catholics', Pap's 'three million Protestants'). Parliament, the press, railways, telegraphs and telephones in turn ensured that what was said in Komárom would be heard across the country. This point is worth underlining: for all the animosity it produced, the culture war in Komárom helped knit the town more tightly into the fabric of a national political culture, though one marked by more intolerant exchanges. To understand fully the intersection of religion and politics in Dualist Hungary, then, requires an examination of the capital *and* the provinces, as well as the mutual influences (the media and transportation networks, political language, symbols and individuals) that linked them.

THE LORDS OF THE RINGS

The culture war in Hungary came to a close in 1894–5, when the Hungarian parliament approved legislation introducing state registers, religious equality and civil marriage. Passage of these laws had not come easily – the bill on Jewish equality was twice rejected by the upper house – but the liberals were resolute in fighting for this legislation. The culture war in Hungary, however, was not simply 'won' by the liberals and 'lost' by the Catholics. Indeed, if there were losers, they lived in Rome and Vienna. The papacy in particular did nothing to hide its dismay at the outcome of the culture war. Cardinal Rampolla, secretary to Leo XIII, exclaimed in

⁴⁹ On the budget debates, see ŠOAK, *Közigazgatási jegyzőkönyv*, minutes of 12 October and 19 December meetings, 1893; on Molnár, *ibid.*, minutes of 10 May 1895 meeting; and on local elections, 'Erőlködés', *Komáromi Lapok*, 16 November 1895.

late 1894: 'The apostolic kingdom of St Stephen cannot be handed over to the Calvinists and Jews without a fight.'⁵⁰ King Francis Joseph was not given to such pronouncements, but he too was left with a bitter taste in his mouth. By signing the 1894–5 legislation, he had been forced to concede that maintenance of the 1867 settlement was more important than the defence of the Catholic church. But if international forces did not determine the outcome of the Hungarian culture war, they did exert a meaningful influence, particularly on the Catholic side. Papal encyclicals, international congresses and Catholic publicists all gave shape to political Catholicism in Hungary. For their part, Hungarian Catholics frequently cited Germany as a model for Catholic organisation and France as a warning against the consequences of civil marriage and of modern society more generally.

In Hungary, liberal elites proved particularly adept at framing debates on marriage and modernity in terms of national loyalty. In the struggle to achieve religious freedom and legal equality of denominations, they created a coalition that had a place for religious Jews (Schnitzer), hawkish Calvinists (Pap) and Catholic liberals (Fittler). While each group had its own reasons for participating in the culture war, they could all rally behind a multivalent discourse on the nation. When linked to notions of progress and culture, this discourse allowed liberals to forge national solidarity by blurring social, political and confessional divisions; when linked to images of 'ultramontanes' and to national decline, it allowed them to tap reservoirs of anticlericalism and Hungarian chauvinism. This anticlerical rhetoric, however, came at a price, and one outcome of the culture war was that it was increasingly difficult (though still far from impossible) to be politically liberal and religiously Catholic. Emphasis on the nation also obscured the mixed legacy of the culture war for two seemingly 'victorious' groups, Jews and Calvinists. If the culture war removed the last obstacle in the path of what historians have called the 'Magyar-Jewish symbiosis', it also revived antisemitism in both politics and everyday life, and Jews would soon discover that achievement of legal equality did not wash away social, economic and cultural barriers between Christians and Jews.⁵¹ The balance-sheet for Calvinists was equally complex. Calvinists had fought hard for the liberal legislation, most movingly, perhaps, in 1895 when the terminally ill Bishop Pap travelled to Budapest to cast his vote in the upper house in favour of Jewish equality (the bill passed by one vote).⁵² But what had really been gained? Devout Calvinists would soon complain that secularism,

⁵⁰ Csáky, *Kulturkampf*, 101.

⁵¹ János Gyurgyák, *A zsidókérdés Magyarországon* (Budapest, 2001), 65–75.

⁵² Ármín Schnitzer, *Jüdische Kulturbilder (Aus meinem Leben)* (Vienna, 1904), 223–4.

socialism and Catholicism were continuing to advance at the expense of Protestantism, and an 'inner mission' movement dedicated to the revival of Calvinist religiosity stagnated after the turn of the century.

The opposite seemed to have been the case within Hungarian Catholicism. Sensing this, contemporaries spoke of Catholic 'renewal' or 'revival'. While we should be wary of adopting such terms uncritically, there is no question that a more aggressive form of Catholicism emerged in the late 1890s. The most visible sign of this was the People's Party, which won seventeen seats in the 1896 parliamentary elections. The party at first seemed to represent a new current in Hungarian politics, yet it soon proved to be a paper tiger and, in contrast to the Centre Party in Germany, never succeeded in detaching most Catholics from either the government or opposition parties. Voluntary associations are perhaps a better indicator of the vibrancy of Catholic life, and their numbers increased from a few hundred in the 1890s to more than 1,500 a decade later. Such associations brought together clerical and lay Catholics and could transcend, at least in part, differences of class and status. But did this energised Catholic movement constitute a self-contained subculture, the equivalent of the German 'milieu' or the Austrian 'camp'? In the absence of significant local studies of political participation, associational life, marriage patterns and popular forms of piety (to name just a few under-researched topics), it seems premature to draw hard and fast conclusions. Certainly, the presence of a large number of Catholics alone did not guarantee the emergence of a strong Catholic communal life, and there is evidence that even some of the 'Crusading Knights of Yore', as Gyula Krúdy labelled Budapest's Catholic intelligentsia, lost their enthusiasm over time.⁵³ Yet there is no question that the Hungarian culture war gave Catholics a more determined leadership – men like Molnár, Prohászka and Zichy – as well as a wider organisational base. This movement would slowly lay the groundwork for the close relationship between the Catholic church and the conservative state in inter-war Hungary.

And what of ordinary men and women? What would the legacy of the culture war be for them? One way to think about this is to return to our case study. The first civil marriage in Komárom took place on 26 October 1895 in the town hall, which *Komáromi Lapok* enthusiastically called the 'civil church'.⁵⁴ Patriotic symbols abounded: the young couple were in Hungarian dress, while the officiant, János Domány, wore a tricolour sash.

⁵³ Gyula Krúdy, 'Catholic Crusading Knights of Yore: Their Glory and their Decline', in John Bátki (ed.), *Krúdy's Chronicles* (Budapest, 2000), 33–40.

⁵⁴ 'Az első polgári házasság Komáromban', *Komáromi Lapok*, 2 November 1895; 'Az első polgárházasság', *Komárommegyei Közlöny*, 30 October 1895.

Domány's language challenged the Catholic assertion of the sanctity and hence inviolability of the family: 'The unity of the political nation can only be achieved', Domány said, 'if the family itself is the basis of state existence, if marriage is placed under uniform state law.' Further blurring the line between public and private, he noted that love is the basis of both marriage and of the nation, for only love can protect 'the Hungarian nation surrounded by many enemies'. Following this inspiring civil rite, the couple went to the Calvinist church for a religious ceremony. Like conscription, public schools and national holidays, civil marriage would become a ritual of modern citizenship, and one that would endure through to the present day. To paraphrase Eugen Weber, civil marriage played a part, however small, in turning peasants, artisans and workers in Komárom into Hungarians.⁵⁵ Or perhaps even Czechoslovaks, since after 1918 this patriotic town would belong not to Hungary but to Czechoslovakia. But such are the ironies of central European history.

⁵⁵ Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen* (Stanford, Calif., 1977).

Annotated bibliography

THE NEW CATHOLICISM

The literature on nineteenth-century European Catholicism is vast and extends across all the European languages. What follows can therefore be neither comprehensive, nor representative; I have focused on those texts that will allow readers to pursue the issues raised in the chapter. There has always been widespread scholarly interest in the popes of this century, especially the charismatic Pius IX, whose pontificate was crucial to the developments discussed in this chapter. Three classic studies are especially worthy of mention: Roger Aubert, *Le pontificat de Pie IX (1846–1878)* (Paris, 1952); E. E. Y. Hales, *Pio Nono. A Study in European Politics and Religion in the Nineteenth Century* (New York, 1954), a lively portrait, with a discussion of this pope's 'modernity' that still repays attention; G. Martina, *Pio IX*, 3 vols. (Rome, 1974–90), a monumental but engagingly written study based on intense archival research that is now the reference work. For a general study of the nineteenth-century papacy with many suggestive insights, see Owen Chadwick, *A History of the Popes 1830–1914* (Oxford, 1998). Useful studies of the First Vatican Council include Klaus Schatz, *Vaticanum I 1969–1870*, 2 vols. (Paderborn, 1992) and A. B. Hasler, *Pius IX (1846–1878), päpstliche Unfehlbarkeit und I. Vatikanisches Konzil. Dogmatisierung und Durchsetzung einer Ideologie*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart, 1977); the former offers a broadly sympathetic analysis of the background to the Council while the latter is critical and stresses the manipulative character of the proceedings.

A useful study of the mid-century papacy with a stronger emphasis on diplomacy and high politics is Frank J. Coppa, *Cardinal Giacomo Antonelli and Papal Politics in European Affairs* (Albany, N.Y., 1990). Numerous scholarly source editions of papal diplomatic correspondence have appeared. A useful list of some of the most important publications in this area may be found in Frank J. Coppa, *The Origins of the Italian Wars of Independence* (London, 1992), 156–8. There are also numerous studies of the relations

between the papacy and specific states. Many of these are cited in the individual chapters of this volume. Useful recent bibliographies may be found in René Rémond, *Religion and Society in Modern Europe*, trans. Antonia Nevill (London, 1999), 219–29 and Emiel Lamberts (ed.), *The Black International. L'International noire* (Leuven, 2002), 482–505. For a comparative study of nineteenth-century Catholic political movements across Europe, with stimulating discussion of the modernity debate and an excellent bibliography, see Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1996). An outstanding single-country study that raises similar issues is Margaret Lavinia Anderson, *Practicing Democracy. Elections and Political Culture in Imperial Germany* (Princeton, 2000).

Studies of transnational scope that focus on the history of European Catholicism in this era include Roger Aubert, Johannes Beckmann, Patrick J. Corish and Rudolf Lill, *The Church in the Age of Liberalism*, trans. Peter Becker (London, 1981), which sets Vatican policy in the context of broader cultural developments within Catholicism, and Adrian Hastings (ed.), *Modern Catholicism* (London, 1991). There are very few studies that address the problem of Catholic revival at a European level. The problem is sketched out in the following brief treatments (with useful guides to further reading): David Blackbourn, 'The Catholic Church in Europe since the French Revolution', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 33 (1991), 778–90; Caroline Ford, 'Religion and Popular Culture in Modern Europe', *Journal of Modern History* 65 (1993), 152–75; M. L. Anderson, 'The Limits of Secularisation: On the Problem of the Catholic Revival in Nineteenth-Century Germany', *Historical Journal* 38 (1995), 647–70. A valuable compilation of country-by-country studies is Austen Ivereigh (ed.), *The Politics of Religion in an Age of Revival: Studies in Nineteenth-Century Europe and Latin America* (London, 2000). The difficult question of whether the changes within European Catholicism were driven from above or below, or from outside the system itself, is still under debate. One (French national) study that emphasises popular voluntarism is Bruno Horaist, *La dévotion au pape et les catholiques français sous le pontificat de Pie IX (1846–1878) d'après les archives de la Bibliothèque Apostolique Vaticane* (Rome, 1995). By contrast, a study of ultramontanist in Baden stresses the coercive, anti-modern character of the movement: Götz von Olenhusen, *Klerus und abweichendes Verhalten. Zur Sozialgeschichte katholischer Priester im 19. Jahrhundert: Die Erzdiözese Freiburg* (Göttingen, 1994). The relationship between clerical initiatives and extra-ecclesiastical observance is discussed in T. K. Hoppen, *Elections, Politics and Society in Ireland*

1832–1885 (Oxford, 1984) and Frances Lannon, *Privilege, Persecution and Prophecy. The Catholic Church in Spain, 1875–1975* (Oxford, 1987).

Local and regional studies of Catholic devotional cultures are now flourishing; the most important local studies are cited in the individual chapter bibliographies, but see, for example, N. Busch, 'Fromme Westfalen. Zur Sozial- und Mentalitätsgeschichte des Herz-Jesu-Kultes zwischen Kulturkampf und Erstem Weltkrieg', *Westfälische Zeitschrift* 144 (1984), 329–50; Ruth Harris, *Lourdes. Body and Spirit in the Secular Age* (London, 1999); David Blackbourn, *Marpingen. Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Bismarckian Germany* (Oxford, 1993). There is now a very substantial literature on the role played by women in the nineteenth-century Catholic revival; especially useful are: C. Clear, *Nuns in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Washington D.C., 1988); C. Langlois, *Le catholicisme au féminin. Les congrégations françaises à supérieure générale au XIXe siècle* (Paris, 1984); I. Götz von Olenhusen (ed.), *Wunderbare Erscheinungen. Frauen und Frömmigkeit im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Paderborn, 1995).

To date there exists no monograph-length pan-European study of the mobilisation of Catholics around the objectives of the papacy. A brilliant brief treatment is Vincent Viaene, 'The Roman Question. Catholic Mobilisation and Papal Diplomacy during the Pontificate of Pius IX (1846–1878)', in Emiel Lamberts (ed.), *The Black International. L'Internationale noire. 1870–1878* (Leuven, 2002), 135–77. There are many excellent monographs on journalism and journalists in specific countries, but still no up-to-date synthetic study of the European Catholic press. Catholic revival as a transnational European phenomenon is still not adequately researched; the networks that transmitted new devotional practices and the relationship between clerical initiatives and popular piety are still only patchily understood.

ANTICLERICALISM

As nineteenth-century European history has usually been interpreted backwards from the outbreak of World War I, leading to an extreme emphasis on national integration and national conflict, and as much attention has focused on economic development and social conflict, the European dimension of the culture wars has been almost completely ignored. Hardly any publications on the anticlerical protagonists in the culture wars have a comparative or even transnational and all-European approach. Massimo Salvadori, *European Liberalism* (New York, 1972) deals with key ideas of European liberalism. Lothar Gall (ed.), *Liberalismus* (Cologne, 1976) is a

heterogenous and by now largely outdated collection of essays and does not deal with the culture wars in any particular way. The recent interest in the history of the bourgeois middle class has induced some studies of Liberal party politics, but none with a substantial comparative or transnational European dimension. For a short introduction to democratic internationalism, but largely restricted to its formal organisation, see Alwin Hanschmidt, *Republikanisch- demokratischer Internationalismus im 19. Jahrhundert. – Ideen – Formen – Orientierungsversuche* (Husum, 1977). Studies of European socialism have concentrated on political organisation, social conflict and democratisation in a national context, not religion and the culture wars from a European perspective. Neither James Joll, *The Second International 1889–1914* (London, 1974) nor any other studies of transnational socialism deals with anticlericalism and the culture wars. The only comparative study of European anticlericalism generally remains a special issue 13/2 (1983) of the *European Studies Review*, now the *European History Quarterly*, edited by René Rémond. Some works on freemasonry do take an all-European approach, but usually without any analysis of freemasonry as a transnational network. See, for example, Helmut Reinalter, *Die Freimaurer* (Munich, 2000) and Dieter A. Binder, *Die diskrete Gesellschaft. Geschichte und Symbolik der Freimaurer* (Graz, Vienna and Cologne, 1995). The works in French, Italian and Spanish cited in this chapter sometimes include chance references to transnational communication and foreign models, but, as a general rule, they tend to be even more nationally restricted.

Major events of the culture wars have also not been treated from an all-European perspective. For the Vatican Council of 1869–70 see Klaus Schatz, *Vaticanum I*, 3 vols. (Paderborn, 1992–4) and Robert Aubert, *Vaticanum I* (Mainz, 1965; in French, 1964). There is no systematic account, however, of anticlerical reactions in Europe to the *Syllabus errorum* or the Vatican Council and the declaration of infallibility. Equally, some of the scandals mentioned in this article have been dealt with in monographic studies, but largely ignoring their role in constituting, at least temporarily, European public spaces, and without discussing their wider European impact and meaning. These books include David I. Kertzer, *The kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara* (New York, 1997), Daniele Scalise, *Il caso Mortara: la vera storia del bambino ebreo rapito del papa* (Milan, 1997), Eugen Weber, *Satan franc-maçon: la mystification de Léo Taxil* (Paris, 1964) and Jordi de Cambra Bassols, *Anarquismo y positivismo: el caso Ferrer* (Madrid, 1981).

In other words, much needs to be done to rectify the excessive emphasis, important as it was, on the national dimension of the culture wars. One

interesting avenue for future research concerns the (temporary) Europeanisation of public space, especially through major scandals which were reported throughout Europe, agitated European anticlericalism and provoked anything from governmental action to parliamentary debate and journalistic comment to local demonstrations and the use of physical force against priests, Catholic politicians or believers *in other countries*. Also promising is the analysis of transnational political and societal networks at all levels, how they operated and to what extent they facilitated the reception of foreign models and their cultural transfer in Europe. We know hardly anything about anticlerical solidarity committees, for example to support the German Liberals in their *Kulturkampf* in the 1870s; more formalised exchanges in the international organisations of European liberalism, radicalism, socialism and anarchism, possibly also concerning attitudes to religion, the church and secularisation; and personal networks facilitating transnational communication and social learning processes. It would also be important to gather more information about the role of foreign models and their (partial) transfer between European countries, concerning, for example, the export and import of foreign anticlerical and secularising legislation; their contribution to shaping anticlerical political strategies through imitation, such as possibly in the Swiss case in relation to the German *Kulturkampf*, or through a pronounced emphasis on the uniqueness of a particular national political culture, such as perhaps in the Netherlands, rejecting the import of other national models; and, finally, concerning the transfer of visual images and other forms of cultural representation and of anticlerical rhetoric, leading to a certain uniformity in the anticlerical modes of conflict in the culture wars. Last but not least, more comparative work needs to be done concerning the legacies of the culture wars for twentieth-century European history, and not just where the linkages are obvious, such as in the case of the Spanish civil war of 1936–9.

FRANCE

There is no comprehensive history of the French culture war in either English or French. The most authoritative introduction to the religious history of France is Gérard Cholvy and Yves-Marie Hilaire, *Histoire religieuse de la France contemporaine*, 3 vols. (Toulouse, 1985–8). For the legislative culture war and general background, consult older histories such as John McManners, *Church and State in France, 1870–1914* (London, 1972), Maurice Larkin, *Church and State after the Dreyfus Affair. The Separation Issue in France* (London, 1974). and Evelyn M. Acomb, *The French*

Laic Laws, 1879–1889 (New York, 1941). For an introduction to the wider culture war, the pioneering essays in Theodore Zeldin (ed.), *Conflicts in French Society: Anticlericalism, Education and Moralism in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1970) remain invaluable. They should be supplemented by the articles on religion and violence in nineteenth-century France in a special issue of the journal *French Historical Studies* (volume 21/1, winter 1998), edited by Timothy Tackett and containing notable contributions from Claude Langlois, Sheryl Kroen, Raymond Jonas, Michel Lagrée and Caroline Ford. Claude Langlois' two contributions to this debate should be read in conjunction with his chapter 'Catholiques et laïcs' in the now classic *Les lieux de mémoire*, 7 vols. (Paris, 1984–92), edited by Pierre Nora and used here in the three-volume Quarto edition (Paris, 1997), II, 2327–58.

The revolutionary origins of the culture war can be pursued in Nigel Aston, *Religion and Revolution in France 1780–1804* (London, 2000), which has an excellent bibliography. Broad-brush overviews of the nineteenth-century conflicts are painted by Ralph Gibson, 'Why Republicans and Catholics Couldn't Stand Each Other in the Nineteenth Century', in Frank Tallett and Nicholas Atkin (eds.), *Religion, Society and Politics since 1789* (London, 1991), 107–20, and James F. McMillan, 'Religion and Politics in Nineteenth-Century France: Further Reflections on Why Catholics and Republicans Couldn't Stand Each Other', in Austen Ivereigh (ed.), *The Politics of Religion in an Age of Revival: Studies in Nineteenth-Century Europe and Latin America* (London, 2001), 43–55. The rise of militant ultramontane Catholicism in France is obviously a crucial theme. Its personification, the combative journalist Louis Veuillot, still awaits his definitive biographer. Benoît Leroux's brief *Louis Veuillot: un homme, un combat* (Paris, 1984) furnishes a start, which can be followed up by the more thematic study by Pierre Pierrard, *Louis Veuillot* (Paris, 1998). In English, a brief outline of Veuillot's outlook and values is sketched by James F. McMillan, 'Remaking Catholic Europe: Louis Veuillot and the Ultramontane Project', *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte* XIV (2001), 112–22, but the standard work remains Marvin L. Brown, *Louis Veuillot: French Ultramontane Journalist and Layman, 1813–1883* (Durham, N.C., 1977). The sweeping triumph of the ultramontane movement in the French church is recorded in Austin Gough, *Paris and Rome: The Gallican Church and the Ultramontane Campaign, 1843–1853* (Oxford 1986), a brilliant study of ecclesiastical politics which is more wide-ranging than its austere title might suggest. The special position of the see of Paris, where liberal and neo-Gallican tendencies survived the ultramontane onslaught, much to the consternation of Rome, is magisterially surveyed by Jacques-Olivier Boudon, *Paris capitale religieuse sous le Second Empire* (Paris, 2001). The

two key works on nineteenth-century French bishops are Jacques-Olivier Boudon, *L'épiscopat français à l'époque concordataire, 1802–1905: origines, formation, nomination* (Paris, 1996) and Jacques Gadille, *La pensée et l'action politique des évêques français au début de la Troisième République, 1870–1883*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1967). On the persistence of Catholic antipathy to Protestantism, see the thesis of Michele Sacquin, *L'anti-protestantisme en France de 1814 à 1870* (Paris, 1998) and for the later period J. Bauberot and Valentine Zuber, *Une haine oubliée* (Paris, 2000). The belief in a masonic conspiracy against the church is analysed and documented in E. Poulat and J.-P. Laurant (eds.), *L'antimaçonnisme catholique*. Les Franc-Maçons de Mgr de Ségur (Paris, 1994). The ugly face of Catholic antisemitism is revealed by Pierre Sorlin, *La Croix et les juifs (1880–1889). Contribution à l'histoire de l'antisémitisme contemporain* (Paris, 1967) and explored further in Pierre Birnbaum, 'La France aux français'. *Histoire des haines nationalistes* (Paris, 1993).

On the republican side, the French literature on the crucial but untranslatable concept of *laïcité* is enormous. The starting-point remains Georges Weill, *Histoire de l'idée laïque en France au xixe siècle* (Paris, 1925), but it is necessary to engage with the *oeuvre* of Emile Poulat, perhaps most usefully approached via his *Liberté, laïcité: la guerre des deux Frances et le principe de la modernité* (Paris, 1987). See additionally Jean Bauberot, *La morale laïque contre l'ordre moral* (Paris, 1987), and the stimulating essays in Jean-Marie Mayeur, *La question laïque, xixe–xxe siècle* (Paris, 1997). René Rémond, *L'anticléricalisme en France de 1815 à nos jours* (Paris, 1976) is a masterly overview of its subject and one of the few works to make available documentary source material. Anti-Jesuit obsessions are skilfully dissected by Geoff Cubitt, *The Jesuit Myth: Conspiracy Theory and Politics in Nineteenth-Century France* (Oxford, 1993). Sudhir Hazareesingh, *Intellectual Founders of the Republic: Five Studies in Nineteenth-Century French Political Thought* (Oxford, 2001) provides an interesting reappraisal of some obscure but influential republican thinkers, while Phillip Bertocci, *Jules Simon: Republican Anticlericalism and Cultural Politics in France 1848–1886* (Columbia, Mo., 1978) remains a useful study of a significant player in the early Third Republic.

Maurice Agulhon, *Marianne into Battle: Republican Imagery and Symbolism in France 1789–1880* (Cambridge, 1981), pioneered a new approach to the history of political culture and he has produced two sequels, *Marianne au pouvoir. L'imagerie et la symbolique républicaine de 1880 à 1914* (Paris, 1989) and the recent *Métamorphoses de Marianne: l'imagerie et la symbolique républicaines de 1914 à nos jours* (Paris, 2001). The role of memory in political

conflicts is flagged specifically by J.-M. Goudenot and E. Walter, 'Les centennaires de Voltaire et Rousseau', in Pierre Nora, *Les lieux de mémoire*, Quarto edition, 351–82, and more generally by Avner Ben-Amos, *Funerals, Politics and Memory in Modern France 1789–1996* (Oxford, 2000) and Robert Gildea, *The Past in French History* (New Haven and London, 1994). Clashes of cultural representation through the development of Catholic alternatives to Marianne are the subject of Raymond Jonas, *France and the Cult of the Sacred Heart: An Epic Tale for Modern Times* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 2000) and James F. McMillan, 'Reclaiming a Martyr: French Catholics and the Cult of Joan of Arc, 1890–1920' in Diana Wood (ed.), *Martyrs and Martyrologies*, Studies in Church History, vol. XXX (Oxford 1993), 359–70. The centrality of pilgrimages in Catholic culture has been ably demonstrated by Ruth Harris in her important *Lourdes: Body and Spirit in the Secular Age* (London, 1999) and is also apparent in Philippe Boutry and Michel Cinquen, *Deux pèlerinages au dix-neuvième siècle. Ars et Paray-le-Monial* (Paris, 1980). Marian apparitions have also been brilliantly studied by Thomas Kselman, *Miracles and Prophecies in Nineteenth-Century France* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1983) and by David Blackbourn, *Marpingen: Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Bismarckian Germany* (Oxford, 1993). For the other side of the divide, Jacqueline Lalouette has exhaustively investigated the militant action of the free-thought societies in her *La libre-pensée en France 1848–1940* (Paris, 1997). Her article 'Les banquets du "vendredi dit Saint"', in A. Corbin, N. Gêrôme and D. Tartakowsky (eds.), *Les usages politiques des fêtes au xixe–xxe siècle* (Paris, 1994), 223–35, is suggestive of their implacability in the war against the church. On freemasons, see Sudhir Hazareesingh and Vincent Wright, *Francs-Maçons sous le Second Empire: Les loges provinciales du Grand-Orient à la veille de la Troisième République* (Rennes, 2001) and Maurice Larkin, *Religion, Politics and Preferment in France since the 1890s: La Belle Epoque and its Legacy* (Cambridge, 1995).

For the purposes of the present volume, the local dimension matters most, and the best study of the culture war on the ground is unquestionably Phillipe Boutry's superb *Prêtre et paroisse au pays du curé d'Ars* (Paris, 1986). Jacques Lafon, *Les prêtres, les fidèles et l'Etat: le ménage à trois au xixe siècle* (Paris, 1987) offers many insights into what was at stake in local disputes, while Michel Lagrée, *Religion et cultures en Bretagne 1850–1950* (Paris, 1992) and Jean Faury, *Cléricalisme et anticléricalisme dans le Tarn, 1848–1900* (Toulouse, 1980) are examples of in-depth case studies. The intensity of the *guerre scolaire* at the local level, particularly in Brittany, is highlighted by Robert Gildea's monograph, *Education in Provincial France, 1800–1914: A Study of Three Departments* (Oxford, 1983), while the vexed issue of

cemeteries and the burial of the dead looms large in Thomas Kselman's *Death and the Afterlife in Modern France* (Princeton, 1993). Perceptive insights into the world and mindset of the rural clergy can be obtained from Marcel Launay, *Le bon prêtre: le clergé rural au dix-neuvième siècle* (Paris, 1986) and Pierre Pierrard, *Histoire des curés de campagne de 1789 à nos jours* (Paris, 1986). The late Ralph Gibson also devotes illuminating pages to this subject in his *A Social History of French Catholicism* (London, 1989).

The prolongation of the culture war beyond 1905 is evident in two episodes studied by James F. McMillan, namely the persistence of clerical–anticlerical antagonisms during the First World War and the conflicts generated by the return to power of the left under the Radical Edouard Herriot in 1924. See McMillan, 'French Catholics, *rumeurs infâmes* and the Union Sacrée, 1914–1918', in Frans Coetzee and Marilyn Shevin-Coetzee (eds.), *Authority, Identity and the Social History of the First World War* (Oxford, 1995), 113–32 and his 'Catholicism and Nationalism in France: The Case of the *Fédération nationale catholique*', in Nicholas Atkin and Frank Tallett, *Catholicism in Britain and France since 1789* (London, 1996), 151–63. Also revealing are Jacques Prévotat, *Les Catholiques et l'Action française: Histoire d'une condamnation 1899–1939* (Paris, 2001) and Laurent Joly's study of a leading Catholic Vichyite, *Xavier Vallat: Du nationalisme chrétien à l'antisémitisme d'Etat 1891–1972* (Paris, 2001). For the complex relationship between Catholic Christians and the Vichy regime one should turn first to Wilfrid D. Halls, *Politics, Society and Christianity in Vichy France* (Oxford, 1995). On Occupied France, see especially two local studies, one of Paris, Vera Drapac, *War and Religion: Catholics in the Churches of Occupied Paris* (Washington D.C., 1998) and the other of the Loire region, Robert Gildea's challenging *Marianne in Chains: In Search of the German Occupation 1940–1945* (London, 2002). The essays in Kay Chadwick (ed.), *Catholicism, Politics and Society in Twentieth-Century France* (Liverpool, 2000) help to bring the story up to the present day.

BELGIUM

No general study exists on the conflict between Catholics and liberals in Belgium during the nineteenth century. A reconstruction of the feud thus requires multiple approaches. Studies on political conflict during a certain period or in a certain region can provide useful information. This, for example, applies to André Cordewiener, *Organisations politiques et milieux de presse en régime censitaire. L'expérience liégeoise de 1830 à 1848* (Paris, 1978), Els Witte, *Politieke machtsstrijd in en om de voornaamste Belgische*

steden, 1830–1848 (Brussels, 1973) and C. Lebas, *L'union des catholiques et des libéraux de 1839 à 1847* (Leuven and Paris, 1960). Emiel Lamberts and Jacques Lory have edited a volume of articles on a key moment during the conflict: *1884, un tournant politique en Belgique* (Brussels, 1986). Véronique Adriaens has focused on the political battle in the southern countryside of nineteenth-century East Flanders: *Liberalisme op het Zuid-Oostvlaamse platteland in de 19de eeuw* (Ghent, 1991).

A multitude of studies on the Catholic movement offer a second important approach to analysing the conflict. Liberal Catholicism is analysed by Henri Haag, *Les origines du catholicisme libéral en Belgique*, (Leuven, 1950), Karel Van Isacker, *Werkelijk en wettelijk land. De katholieke opinie tegenover de rechterzijde* (Antwerp, 1955) and Emiel Lamberts, *Kerk en liberalisme in het bisdom Gent, 1821–1857. Een bijdrage tot de studie van het liberaal-katholicisme en het ultramontanisme* (Leuven, 1972). An anthology supervised by Emiel Lamberts was important in launching the study of Belgian ultramontanism: *De kruistocht tegen het liberalisme. Facetten van het ultramontanisme in België in de 19de eeuw* (Leuven, 1984). The battle within the Catholic movement is highlighted in Jean-Luc Soetes, *Structures et organisations de base du parti catholique en Belgique* (Leuven, 1996). Aloïs Simon discusses the relationship between church and politics in several articles. A bibliography is available in Gaston Braive and Jacques Lory (eds.), *L'Eglise et l'Etat à l'époque contemporaine. Mélanges dédiés à la mémoire de Mgr. Aloïs Simon* (Brussels, 1975). The work of Jan Art centres on ecclesiastical structures and parish work and highlights the socio-political impact of church activity: *Kerkelijke structuur en pastorale werking in het bisdom Gent tussen 1830 en 1914* (Kortrijk, 1977). Jan Art analyses church attendance during the nineteenth century in *Herders en parochianen. Kerkelijkheidsgegevens betreffende het bisdom Gent, 1830–1914* (Ghent, 1979). The relationship between the Vatican and Belgium is studied in Vincent Viaene, *Belgium and the Holy See from Gregory XVI to Pius IX (1831–1859). Catholic Revival, Society and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Brussels and Rome, 2001).

Several publications have analysed the various liberal networks. See, for example, the studies by J. Bartier that appeared in the anthologies Guy Cambier (ed.), *Libéralisme et socialisme au 19e siècle* (Brussels, 1981) and Guy Cambier (ed.), *Laïcité et franc-maçonnerie* (Brussels, 1981). Hervé Hasquin edited the anthology *L'histoire de la laïcité* (Brussels, 1979) and *Les visages de la franc-maçonnerie belge* (Brussels, 1983). The anthology *Libre Pensée et pensée libre*, edited by Andrée Despy-Meyer and Hervé Hasquin, is also useful (Brussels, 1990). Els Witte has examined the Belgian associations of free-thinkers in 'De Belgische Vrijdenkersorganisaties (1854–1914).

Ontstaan, ontwikkeling en rol', *Tijdschrift voor de Studie van de Verlichting* 5/2 (1977), 125–286. Positivism in Belgium is analysed in Pierre Daled, *Spiritualisme et matérialisme au XIXe siècle* (Brussels, 1998) and Alain Dierkens (ed.), *L'intelligentsia européenne en mutation. 1850–1875. Darwin, le syllabus et leurs conséquences* (Brussels, 1998). Achille Erba has dissected the anticlerical discourse of liberal pamphlets in *L'esprit laïque en Belgique sous le gouvernement libéral doctrinaire, 1857–1870, d'après les brochures politiques* (Leuven, 1967). The recent compilation on the liberal leader *Pierre-Théodore Verhaegen. L'homme, sa vie, sa légende. Bicentenaire d'une naissance* (Brussels, 1996) also includes several contributions on Belgian anticlericalism.

The analyses of the areas of conflict constitute yet another approach to our problem. Education is highlighted in Jacques Lory's benchmark study *Libéralisme et instruction primaire, 1842–1879. Introduction à l'étude de la lutte scolaire en Belgique* (Leuven, 1979) and in recent surveys by Dominique Grootaers, *Histoire de l'enseignement en Belgique* (Brussels, 1998) and Jeffrey Tyssens, *Om de schone ziel van't kind... Het onderwijsconflict als een breuklijn in de Belgische politiek* (Ghent, 1998). Els Witte offers an overview on the attitude of the church to public education: 'Une question de conscience. Over de houding van ded katholieken tegenover het openbaar onderwijs', in Els Witte, Jan De Groof and Jeffrey Tyssens (eds.), *Het Schoolpact van 1958. Ontstaan, grondlijnen en toepassing van een Belgisch compromis* (Brussels, 1999), 433–76. The Catholic reaction to the 1879 law has been analysed by, among others, Jacques Lory, 'La résistance des catholiques belges à la loi du malheur', *Revue du Nord* 67 (1985), 729–49, Jean-Luc Soete for the bishopric of Tournai: 'La résistance catholique face à la loi Van Humbeeck dans l'arrondissement de Tournai', *Revue Belge d'Histoire Contemporaine* 11/1–2 (1980), 370–95 and by Jean-Marie Lermyte for the district of Roeselare: *Voor de ziel van het kind. De schoolstrijd in het klerikale arrondissement Roeselare, 1878–1887* (Bruges, 1985). Other areas of conflict have been relatively neglected. Karel Velle has written on the role of churchbells in 'De klokkenkwestie in België in de 19de eeuw: een bijdrage tot de culturele en politieke geschiedenis van het platteland', *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* 75/2 (1997), 343–82. The relationship between the church and the armed forces is discussed in André Miroir, 'Le sabre, le goupillon et la constitution. Réflexions sur le concours des autorités civiles et militaires aux cérémonies religieuses', in Guy Cambier (ed.), *Problèmes d'histoire du christianisme* (Brussels, 1979), VIII, 107–37 and on the issue of burials see Emiel Lamberts, 'De kerkbovenkwestie', in *L'initiative publique des communes en Belgique, 1795–1940. Colloque international, 1984. Actes* (Brussels, 1986), II, 785–92.

Lastly, a number of scholars have focused on collective protest actions. Frans Van Kalken's *Commotions populaires en Belgique, 1834–1902* (Brussels, 1936) and Jan Dhondt's 'Parlementaire werking en agitatie in onze eigen hedendaagse geschiedenis', in *Machten en Mensen. De belangrijkste studies van Jan Dhondt* (Ghent, 1976), 561–84 laid the foundation for this approach to nineteenth-century Belgian history. Gita Deneckere has analysed these actions in detail in *Geuzengeweld. Antiklerikaal straatrumoer in de politieke geschiedenis van België, 1831–1914* (Brussels, 1998). On the collective protest of 1884, see Luc Keunings, 'Le maintien de l'ordre en 1884', in Emiel Lamberts and Jacques Lory (eds.), *1884: un tournant politique en Belgique* (Brussels, 1986); on the events of 1871, see Philippe Van Tiggelen, 'Les émeutes de novembre 1871 à Bruxelles et la révocation du ministère d'Anethan', *Revue Belge d'Histoire Contemporaine* 15/1–2 (1984), 165–200.

These books and articles draw on a broad and disparate range of primary sources. For an extensive survey of the Belgian primary sources, see Patricia Van den Eeckhout and Guy Vanthemsche (eds.), *Bronnen voor de studie van het hedendaagse België* (Brussels, 1999).

THE NETHERLANDS

The culture war in the Netherlands has not been the subject of a comprehensive study. On the one hand, information about the relationship between the state and the Catholic church can be found in the numerous studies of 'pillarisation', a term used for the separation of the population into closed religious and socio-political groups; on the other hand, there are several studies on the influence of the culture war in the narrower sense.

On Dutch 'pillarisation' (*verzuiling*) studies abound, but attention is seldom paid to the culture war. English introductions by political scientists are Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan, 'Cleavage Structures, Party Systems and Voter Alignments: An Introduction', in Lipset and Rokkan (eds.), *Party Systems and Voter Alignments* (Glencoe, 1967), 1–64, Arend Lijphart, *The Politics of Accommodation. Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands* (Berkeley, 1968) and Arend Lijphart, 'Consociational Democracy', *World Politics* 18 (1978), 565–75. The most recent and up-to-date historical summary, which concentrates on the nineteenth century and also pays attention to popular culture, is J. C. H. Blom and J. Talsma (eds.), *De verzuiling voorbij. Godsdienst, stand en natie in de lange negentiende eeuw* (Amsterdam, 2000). For a comparative perspective on the Catholic 'pillar' in some small European countries: Hans Righart, *De katholieke zuil in*

Europa. Het ontstaan van verzuiling onder katholieken in Oostenrijk, Zwitserland, België en Nederland (Amsterdam, 1986).

In 1998, an important study appeared on the (apparently modest) influence of the German culture war on Dutch politics and public life: Pieter de Coninck, *Een les uit Pruisen. Nederland en de Kulturkampf 1870–1880* (Leiden, 1998); a quick survey in German is Herbert Lepper, 'Der "Kulturkampf" im Rheinland und seine Auswirkungen auf Belgien und auf die Niederlande. Eine Skizze', in Detlev Arens (ed.), *Rhein-Maas-Kulturräum in Europa. Ergebnisse eines Symposiums in Aachen (25.–27. Oktober 1990)* (Cologne, 1991), 70–86. J. P. de Valk, *Roomser dan de paus? Studies over de betrekkingen tussen de Heilige Stoel en het Nederlands katholicisme, 1815–1940* (Nijmegen, 1998) deals with the relations between Dutch Catholic authorities and Rome in the nineteenth century. In order to avoid conflicts, Dutch bishops tended to be more circumspect than the Vatican. Of interest for a study of the culture war are J. A. Bornewasser, 'Mythical Aspects of Dutch Anti-Catholicism in the Nineteenth Century', in John Selwyn Bromley and Ernst Heinrich Kossmann (eds.), *Britain and the Netherlands*, vol. V: *Some Political Mythologies* (The Hague, 1975), 184–206, and the study of Dutch no-popery by Johan van Zuthem, *'Heelen en halven': orthodox-protestantse voormannen en het 'politiek' antipapisme in de periode 1872–1925* (Hilversum, 2001). On the controversies between Catholics and Protestants surrounding public rituals and the 'procession question', see Peter Jan Margry, *Teedere quæsties: religieuze rituelen in conflict. Confrontaties tussen katholieken en protestanten rond de processiecultuur in 19^e-eeuws Nederland* (Hilversum, 2000), which also pays attention to the differences between elite and mass, centre and periphery. On the Roermond case of the 'procession hunt' see also D. P. J. Wynands, 'Rhein-maasländische Wallfahrten des 19. Jahrhunderts im Spannungsfeld von Politik und Frömmigkeit', *Annalen des Historischen Verein für den Niederrhein insbesondere die alte Erzdiocese Köln* (1988), 115–31 and J. L. J. Schmitz, 'Deutsche Wallfahrten nach Roermond und die "Prozessionen-Jagd"', in *Heimatkalender des Kreises Heinsberg* (1985), 98–104. For the Catholic German (Rhineprovince) background to the pilgrimages from Prussia to the Netherlands, see Eleonore Föhles, *Kulturkampf und katholisches Milieu 1866–1890 in den niederrheinischen Kreisen Kempen und Geldern und der Stadt Viersen* (Geldern, 1995). On regional aspects, see H. L. Cox, 'Die Auswirkungen der deutsch-niederländischen Staatsgrenze von 1815 auf die volkstümliche Heiligenverehrung im Rhein-Maasgebiet; Ein Beitrag zur kulturräumlichen Stellung des Rhein-Maas-Gebietes', in *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* 28 (1983), 111–31, and for local Limburg

sources P. J. H. Ubachs, *Handboek voor de geschiedenis van Limburg* (Hilversum, 2000), 390–2, 400–2, 442. On German Catholics and the foundation of new religious orders/cloisters in the Netherlands, see Rita Mülleijans, *Klöster im Kulturkampf. Die Ansiedlung katholischer Orden und Kongregationen aus dem Rheinland und ihre Klosterneubauten im belgisch-niederländischen Grenzraum infolge des preußischen Kulturkampfes* (Aachen, 1992).

Dutch liberalism was dominated by a culture of rather modest notables and it began to lose its position once the masses entered the political scene. There are several essays about Dutch nineteenth-century liberalism and bourgeois culture in Simon Groenveld and Michael Wintle (eds.), *Britain and the Netherlands XII. Under the Sign of Liberalism. Varieties of Liberalism in Past and Present* (Zutphen, 1997). An intellectual history of left-wing Dutch liberalism in the nineteenth century is Siep Stuurman, *Wacht op onze daden. Het liberalisme en de vernieuwing van de Nederlandse staat* (Amsterdam, 1992). Related studies by Stuurman include 'John Bright and Samuel van Houten. Radical Liberalism and the Working Classes in Britain and the Netherlands', *History of European Ideas* 11 (1989), 593–604; '1848: Revolutionary Reform in the Netherlands', *European History Quarterly* 21 (1991), 445–80. See on the Dutch new liberalism of the end of the nineteenth century also Stefan Dudink, *Deugdzaam liberalisme. Sociaal-liberalisme in Nederland, 1870–1901* (Amsterdam, 1997). Henk te Velde, *Gemeenschapszin en plichtsbef. Liberalisme en nationalisme in Nederland, 1870–1918* (The Hague, 1992) is a book on liberalism and nationalism; Henk te Velde, 'Bürgertum und Bürgerlichkeit in den Niederlanden des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts', *Jahrbuch Zentrum für Niederlande-Studien* 7/8 (1996/7), 161–76; Henk te Velde, 'Le libéralisme néerlandais et la nation au dix-neuvième siècle', in S. Stuurman (ed.), *Les libéralismes, la théorie politique et l'histoire* (Amsterdam, 1994), 47–59. For a general account: Ernst Heinrich Kossmann, *The Low Countries 1780–1940* (Oxford, 1978).

Although studies on popular Catholicism are beginning to appear in the Netherlands, a lot of work remains to be done in this field. It would be especially welcome if studies of this kind were to concentrate on the strange relationship between Catholics and politics. Catholics were a large minority, but they seem curiously absent from all non-strictly Catholic organisations. Protestants dominated public life. Catholics were not conspicuous in non-religious societies such as popular single-issue movements, nationalist societies, feminist groups or socialist parties. Catholics mainly joined their own 'pillarised' organisations, and even if their attitude could be explained by the long Dutch history of repressive tolerance, a thorough investigation of the question would be very welcome.

The evaluation of the central position and strategies of the media in the Netherlands in the culture war is also a research desideratum. Newspapers, magazines, pamphlets and books played a major role in directing and influencing the opinion of the masses and of politics on a local, regional and national level. In relation to visual culture more research is also necessary into the function and results of the creation or revival of Catholic devotions and the massive circulation of devotional prints and leaflets.

BRITAIN

The role of religion in political conflict in the 1868–74 period, at national level, is treated at length in J. P. Parry, *Democracy and Religion: Gladstone and the Liberal Party, 1867–1875* (Cambridge, 1986).

The disputes about educational policy have been considered by a number of historians. The best general surveys of the educational difficulty are: M. Cruickshank, *Church and State in English Education: 1870 to the Present Day* (London, 1963) and J. Murphy, *Church, State and Schools in Britain, 1800–1970* (London, 1971). Two useful contemporary histories were republished in one volume with an introduction by Asa Briggs (Brighton, 1972): these are Francis Adams, *History of the Elementary School Contest in England* (1882) and John Morley, *The Struggle for National Education* (1873). On the National Education League the best analyses are the chapter in D. A. Hamer, *The Politics of Electoral Pressure: A Study in the History of Victorian Reform Agitations* (Hassocks, 1977) and P. Auspos, 'Radicalism, Pressure Groups, and Party Politics: From the National Education League to the National Liberal Federation', *Journal of British Studies* 20 (1980), 184–204.

A few local studies also consider the political effects of struggles over Clause 25, such as R. L. Greenall, 'Popular Conservatism in Salford, 1868–1886', *Northern History* 9 (1974), 123–38, and N. Collins, *Politics and Elections in Nineteenth-Century Liverpool* (Aldershot, 1994).

The best discussion of nonconformist political thought is T. Larsen, *Friends of Religious Equality: Nonconformist Politics in mid-Victorian England* (Woodbridge, 1999). David Bebbington, *The Nonconformist Conscience: Chapel and Politics, 1870–1914* (London, 1982) is also useful. Little work has been done on the Church Defence Institution, apart from M. J. D. Roberts, 'Pressure-Group Politics and the Church of England: The Church Defence Institution, 1859–1896', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 35 (1984), 560–82.

There is still substantial scope for further research, especially in the two areas on which this chapter focuses. On the one hand, the lack of local studies is surprising, particularly of London, which had the largest school board in the country, and Manchester, which was the centre of educational radicalism in the 1840–70 period and also had one of the largest concentrations of Catholics in the country. In general, the political significance of school board elections has been underplayed. On the other hand, there is scope for more work viewing the political history of nineteenth-century Britain in the context of continental events and arguments. There have been excellent general studies of Victorian anti-Catholicism, such as E. R. Norman, *Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England* (London, 1968) and D. G. Paz, *Popular anti-Catholicism in Mid-Victorian England* (Stanford, 1992). But there has been much less consideration of the Catholic problem in British politics, outside Ireland, and almost no discussion of the way in which perceptions of the continental regimes impacted on British political debate.

SPAIN

A short bibliography of the culture wars in Spain during the nineteenth century should begin with an examination of the recent literature on the modern Spanish church. Not long ago, José Manuel Cuenca Toribio, 'La historiografía eclesiástica española contemporánea. Balance provisional a finales de siglo (1976–1999)', *Historia Sacra* 51 (1999), 355–83) described Spanish ecclesiastical history as 'weak' and 'underdeveloped', in relation both to foreign literature on the churches and to other branches of national historiography. Nevertheless, Cuenca had to admit that significant advances had been accomplished during the last twenty years. Fortunately for those who cannot read Spanish, some of the best comprehensive treatments of Catholicism in Spain (reflecting these advances and breaking the path for new ones) have been written in English. See, for example, William J. Callahan's excellent *The Catholic Church in Spain, 1875–1998* (Washington D.C., 2000), which covers the period not dealt with by his older work *Church, Politics, and Society in Spain, 1750–1874* (Cambridge, Mass., 1984). Frances Lannon's *Privilege, Persecution, and Prophecy. The Catholic Church in Spain, 1875–1975* (Oxford, 1987) also provides a very useful introduction to contemporary Spanish Catholicism.

The history of the culture wars in Spain is, to a large extent, the history of a conflict between so-called 'clericals' and 'anticlericals'. A very recent survey of literature on the subject is provided by Manuel Pérez

Ledesma, 'Studies on Anticlericalism in Contemporary Spain', *International Review of Social History*, 46/2 (2001), 227–55. Recently, too, three collective volumes have made a laudable attempt at analysing the main questions raised by Spanish anticlericalism and secularism: Rafael Cruz (ed.), *El anticlericalismo* (Madrid, 1997); Emilio La Parra and Manuel Suárez Cortina (eds.), *El anticlericalismo español contemporáneo* (Madrid, 1998), and Manuel Suárez Cortina (ed.), *Secularización y laicismo en la España contemporánea* (Santander, 2001). Studies on Spanish anticlericalism have experienced a modest boom during the last decade. José Álvarez Junco's *El Emperador del Paralelo. Lerroux y la demagogia populista* (Madrid, 1990) focuses on the role played by anticlerical discourse in radical politics. An anthropological approach to Spanish anticlericalism is to be found in Manuel Delgado's work – his most recent book, *Luces iconoclastas. Anticlericalismo, espacio y ritual en la España contemporánea* (Barcelona, 2001). In English, Joan C. Ullman wrote one of the pioneering examinations of this issue, *The Tragic Week. A Study of Anticlericalism in Spain* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968); see also Julio de la Cueva, 'The Stick and the Candle. Clericals and Anticlericals in Northern Spain, 1898–1910', *European History Quarterly*, 26/2 (1996), 241–65. Freemasons and, to a lesser extent, free-thinkers have been the object of scholarly concern as well. The leading (but by no means the only) historian of Spanish freemasonry is José A. Ferrer Benimeli, who has written and edited a large number of books on the subject. Conversely, Spanish Protestantism has not benefited from the growing attention directed to these other types of religious dissent.

Confrontation between Catholicism and liberalism is, as in the rest of Europe, at the core of the Spanish culture wars. Emilio La Parra, Manuel Revuelta and Vicente Cárcel Ortí, among other historians, have looked into the subject for the period of liberal revolutions (1808–74). For the period covered by this chapter (1875–1913), relations between the church and the state and Catholic attitudes towards the Restoration liberal regime provide the argument for José Andrés-Gallego, *La política religiosa en España 1889–1913* (Madrid, 1975); María F. Núñez Fernández, *La Iglesia y la Restauración 1875–1881* (Santa Cruz de Tenerife, 1976); Cristóbal Robles, *Insurrección o legalidad. Los católicos y la Restauración* (Madrid, 1988), and for the studies cited in the chapter by Domingo Benavides, Marta Campomar and Solange Hibbs-Lissorgues. More recently, the historiographical focus seems to have shifted towards Catholic responses to anticlericalism and secularisation. A good – if regrettably short – survey of the development of the Catholic movement in Spain is Feliciano Montero's *El movimiento católico en España* (Madrid, 1993). Local cases are well studied by José-Leonardo

Ruiz Sánchez, *Política e Iglesia durante la Restauración. La Liga Católica de Sevilla (1901–1923)* (Seville, 1994) and (in Catalan) by Pere Fullana Puigserver, *El moviment catòlic a Mallorca (1875–1912)* (Barcelona, 1994). A very valuable attempt at interpreting Catholic mobilisation at the turn of the century is Frances Lannon's '1898 and the Politics of Catholic Identity in Spain', in Austen Ivereigh (ed.), *The Politics of Religion in an Age of Revival: Studies in Nineteenth-Century Europe and Latin America* (London, 2000), 56–73. On this topic, see also Julio de la Cueva, 'Católicos en la calle. La movilización de los católicos españoles (1899–1923)', *Historia y Política* 3 (2000), 54–79. Religious orders and religious/secular education provided the argument for some of the most arduous debates. For the former much research is still needed, although Manuel Revuelta is about to complete his outstanding three-volume work on the Jesuits *La Compañía de Jesús en la España contemporánea* (Madrid, 1984 and 1991). For the latter, Alejandro Mayordomo's *Iglesia, Estado y educación. El debate sobre la secularización escolar en España (1900–1913)* (Valencia, 1982), Teóduło García Regidor's *La polémica sobre la secularización de la enseñanza en España (1902–1914)* (Madrid, 1985) and Ana Yetano's *La enseñanza religiosa en la España de la Restauración (1900–1920)* (Barcelona, 1988) are still useful.

ITALY

The state of research on the culture war in Italy remains unsatisfactory. On the one hand, academic research continues to be dominated by the political and social history of the *Risorgimento* and by the history of political Catholicism. The history of ideas has been well covered, although not generally in a way that reflects the perspectives and methodology of present-day cultural history. Of the older studies, the works of Arturo Jemolo are particularly deserving of mention: *Il giansenismo in Italia prima della rivoluzione* (Bari, 1928); *Chiesa e Stato in Italia negli ultimi cento anni* (Turin, 1948); 'Le problème de la laïcité en Italie', in Adrien Audibert (ed.), *La laïcité* (Paris, 1960), 465–80, and *La questione della proprietà ecclesiastica nel Regno di Sardegna e nel Regno d'Italia (1848–1888)* (Bologna, 1974). The works of Giuseppe Spadolini, notably *Il Papato socialista* (Milan, 1959), and *Giolitti e i cattolici* (Florence, 1959), are now outdated. There is abundant research on Catholicism in Italy and on the prehistory of Christian Democracy, in which the culture wars generally figure as an episode or as general background. Countless works have been undertaken on the internal Catholic conflicts of the nineteenth century and on the non-intransigent precursors

of the Catholic modernism that gained ground around the turn of the century. Here again, the culture wars serve as background and are not treated as a topic in their own right. For an example of a local study, see the compilation by Paul Droulers, Giacomo Martina and Paolo Tufari (eds.), *La vita religiosa a Roma intorno al 1870. Ricerche di storia e sociologia* (Rome, 1971). The history of secularism in its narrower sense remains largely unresearched. Jean-Pierre Viallet has published a bibliography that clearly indicates the paucity of work on Italian anticlericalism and secularism and thus, implicitly, on the Italian culture wars more generally (though it should be noted that his commentary is suffused with a sense of French superiority): Jean-Pierre Viallet, 'Anticléricalisme et laïcité en Italie. Bilan historiographique', *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome* 98 (1986), 837–62. On Italian anticlericalism, see also W. William Halpherin, 'Italian Anticlericalism (1871–1914)', *Journal of Modern History* 19 (1947), 18–34. Also useful is Adrian Lyttleton, 'An Old Church and a New State: Italian Anticlericalism (1876–1915)', *European History Quarterly* 2 (1983), 225–48. An outstanding account is Guido Verrucci, *L'Italia laica prima e dopo l'unità, 1848–1876: anticlericalismo, libero pensiero e ateismo nella società italiana* (Roma and Bari, 1979). On Italian freemasonry, see the comprehensive but inaccessibly written study by Aldo A. Mola, *Storia della massoneria italiana. Dalle origini ai nostri giorni*, rev. edn (Milan, 1994). Rosario F. Esposito, *La massoneria e l'Italia dal 1800 ai nostri giorni*, 4th edn (Rome, 1969) and Rosario F. Esposito, *Le buone opere dei laicisti, degli anticlericali e dei frammassoni* (Rome, 1972) are written from a Catholic perspective but offer very differentiated judgements. For further orientation, with useful references, see Jean-Pierre Viallet, 'Anatomie d'une obédience maçonnique: le Grand-Orient d'Italie (1870–1890)', *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome* 90 (1978), 171–236. For an all-Italian comparative perspective on the various groups and ideologies implicated in the culture wars, see the four volumes of conference proceedings *Chiesa e religiosità in Italia dopo l'unità (1861–1878). Atti del quarto convegno di storia della Chiesa, La Mendola, 31 agosto – 5 settembre 1971* (Milan, 1971), whose contributions are still essential reading. The Istituto storico italo-germanico in Trento published the proceedings of a conference held there in 1990 on the *Kulturkampf* in Italy and Germany which examined developments in both countries and focused on mutual perceptions: Rudolf Lill and Francesco Traniello (eds.), *Il 'Kulturkampf' in Italia e nei paesi di lingua tedesca* (Bologna, 1992). On culture war monuments in Rome, see the solidly researched and well-illustrated volume by Lars Berggren and Lennart Sjöstedt, *L'ombra dei grandi. Monumenti e politica monumentale a Roma (1870–1895)* (Rome, 1996).

GERMANY

Otto Pflanze compared the *Kulturkampf* with a kaleidoscope, 'altering its shape with each angle of observation'. Historians have traditionally tended to focus on the high politics of the conflict. For an account that offers a comparative overview of the culture wars in Baden, Bavaria, Prussia and the German Empire, see Ellen L. Evans, *The Cross and the Ballot: Catholic Political Parties in Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Belgium and The Netherlands, 1785–1985* (Boston, 1999). For an analysis of the role played by two key protagonists, see Margaret L. Anderson, *Windthorst. A Political Biography* (Oxford, 1981) and Otto Pflanze, *Bismarck and the Development of Germany*, vol. II: *The Period of Consolidation, 1871–1880* (Princeton, 1990). The incomplete implementation of *Kulturkampf* legislation at the level of everyday experience in the locality is illuminated both in the recent synthesis by Ronald J. Ross, *The Failure of Bismarck's Kulturkampf. Catholicism and State Power in Imperial Germany, 1871–1887* (Washington D.C., 1998) and in the comprehensive local study by Eleonore Föhles, *Kulturkampf und katholisches Milieu in den niederrheinischen Kreisen Kempen und Geldern und der Stadt Viersen* (Viersen, 1995). Marjorie Lamberti, *State, Society and the Elementary School in Imperial Germany* (New York, 1989) also emphasises the limits of state power.

Since the social-historical phase in the 1960s, when the *Kulturkampf* was interpreted as a socio-economic conflict between liberal, bourgeois, urban elites and rural, lower-class Catholics, the historiography of the *Kulturkampf* has fallen mainly within the province of what is known in Germany as 'Katholizismusforschung' (the historical study of Catholicism). Debates in this field were animated by a critical engagement with two paradigms. The first was the concept of a pre-industrial Catholic 'milieu' formulated in 1966 by the sociologist M. Rainer Lepsius. The second was the 'modernisation' perspective of the Bielefeld School, which saw the *Kulturkampf* as a conflict between tradition and modernity. Both views came in for criticism from Margaret L. Anderson, most recently in *Practicing Democracy. Elections and Political Culture in Imperial Germany* (Princeton, 2000). Anderson sees political Catholicism not as the precondition, but as the consequence of the *Kulturkampf* – the latter is seen, firstly, as a *political* conflict in the context of the introduction of the democratic Reichstag franchise and the emergence of mass politics and, secondly, as a democratising influence, whose impact was to broaden political participation. For a critique of this view, based on a relatively narrow definition of democracy, see Christoph Weber, 'Eine starke, eng geschlossene Phalanx'. *Der politische Katholizismus*

und die erste deutsche Reichstagswahl 1871 (Essen, 1992). For a critique of the view that political Catholicism was a consequence of the *Kulturkampf*, see Jonathan Sperber, *Popular Catholicism in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Princeton, 1984), which argues that the infrastructural prefiguration of political Catholicism can already be discerned in Rhineland-Westphalia during the period 1850–70. Here too, the Catholic milieu is seen as the product of modern processes. The notion that Catholicism was rooted in a homogeneous milieu has also been questioned. Thomas Mergel, 'Ultramontanism, Liberalism, Moderation: Political Mentalities and Political Behaviour of the German Catholic Bürgertum, 1848–1914', *Central European History* 29 (1996), 151–74, focuses on the ways in which urban bourgeois Catholics in the Rhineland balanced their commitments to class and confession. The diversity of the processes that formed the Catholic milieu from region to region are emphasised in the recent literature review by Oded Heilbrunner, 'From Ghetto to Ghetto: The Place of German Catholic Society in Recent Historiography', *Journal of Modern History* 72 (2000), 453–95.

Against the background of this revisionist interpretation of Catholicism, the liberals also appeared in a new light. Instead of denouncing their fundamentalist anti-Catholicism as an 'illiberal' betrayal of liberal principles, historians now saw it as central to the liberal worldview itself. The influence of liberal secular assumptions about science and progress is emphasised in David Blackbourn, *Marpingen. Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Bismarckian Germany* (Oxford, 1993). In this case study the *Kulturkampf* appears as a clash between mutually alien cosmologies and the official aggression against the pilgrimage to the 'German Lourdes' as a symptom of the political and hermeneutic impotence of the liberals and the state authorities in the face of Catholic mobilisation. Whereas Blackbourn sees the *Kulturkampf* of the liberals as a phenomenon of the post-Enlightenment, Helmut Walser Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict. Culture, Politics and Ideology 1870–1914* (Princeton, 1995) emphasises the role played by confessional tensions in the context of nation-building processes, especially on the margins of the Reich (Alsace, Poland), where they intensified rival processes of nationalisation: on this, see especially Lech Trzeciakowski, *The Kulturkampf in Prussian Poland* (New York, 1990). The symbiosis of Protestantism, liberalism and nationalism within anti-Catholicism is highlighted in Claudia Lepp, *Protestantisch-liberaler Aufbruch in die Moderne. Der deutsche Protestantenverein in der Zeit der Reichsgründung und des Kulturkampfes* (Gütersloh, 1996).

The conflict-laden relationship between the confessions from the Enlightenment to the German Empire is reconstructed in Wolfgang Altgeld,

Katholizismus, Protestantismus, Judentum. Über religiös begründete Gegensätze und nationalreligiöse Ideen in der Geschichte des deutschen Nationalismus (Mainz, 1992), and the compilations by Olaf Blaschke (ed.), *Konfessionen im Konflikt. Das zweite konfessionelle Zeitalter zwischen 1800–1970* (Göttingen, 2001) and Helmut Walser Smith (ed.), *Protestants, Catholics and Jews in Germany, 1800–1914* (Oxford, 2001). Confessional conflicts in the village are analysed in Tobias Dietrich, *Konfession im Dorf. Soziales Handeln in den religiösen Strukturen des 19. Jahrhunderts. Elsässische, rheinpreußische und thurgauische Landgemeinden im mikrohistorischen Vergleich* (Trier, 2001); ‘culture wars’ in the universities are examined in Lisa Swartout, ‘Dueling Identities: Protestant, Catholic and Jewish Students in the German Empire, 1890–1914’ (Ph.D. project, University of Berkeley, forthcoming).

Comparisons with other societies are obviously essential if we are to establish the weight of confession as a factor in the German *Kulturkampf*. Research in this area now faces the daunting task of analysing the complex interrelationships between de-Christianisation, confessionalisation, nation-building, grass-roots politicisation and bourgeoisification. Since the culture wars were a European phenomenon, the influence of (trans)national models, cultural transfer and public spheres needs to be addressed. Since we are concerned here with a cultural conflict, it is important that due attention at last be paid to the role of cultural factors in the broadest sense, from the modern media (newspapers, caricatures, pamphlets and novels) to confessionally mixed marriages, the feminisation of religion, the popularisation of the natural sciences and the diffusion of a capitalist work ethic. In order to elucidate the relationship between the thought structures of the antagonists, which have tended to date to be considered in isolation, it will be useful to set those liberal, Protestant and Catholic images of ‘the enemy’ that have hitherto largely been considered in isolation, in comparative perspective. Finally, we need to reconstruct the impact of the culture wars on those disciplines of the humanities (history, *Germanistik*, *Volkskunde*, sociology) that continued to wage culture war with epistemological means and have thereby shaped the definition of modernity in Germany.

SWITZERLAND

Since 1984, a comprehensive study has been available that illuminates the Swiss culture war in all its complexity and also considers the historical background: Peter Stadler, *Der Kulturkampf in der Schweiz. Eidgenossenschaft und katholische Kirche im europäischen Umfeld 1848–1888* (Zurich, 1984). This work is based on detailed archival research, but also takes account of the

entire literature until the 1980s. The second edition (Zurich, 1996) provides an 'Afterword on the state of research' that covers new publications to 1995.

As an alternative to Stadler's *magnum opus*, readers can consult the brief overview in Lukas Vischer, Lukas Schenker and Rudolf Dellsperger (eds.), *Ökumenische Kirchengeschichte der Schweiz* (Fribourg and Basel, 1994). Various publications have focused on regional aspects. These include: on the Berne Jura, *Du Sonderbund au Kulturkampf. Delémont 19–23 avril 1999* (Lausanne, 2000) and Jean-François Roth, *Le catholicisme politique jurassien entre libéralisme et ultramontanisme (1873–1896)* (Fribourg, 1992); on Geneva, Jean-Blaise Fellay, Olivier Fatio, Victor Conzemius and Urs von Arx, *Catholicisme et démocratie au 19^e siècle à Genève et en Suisse* (Geneva, 1996); on Solothurn, Thomas Wallner, *Geschichte des Kantons Solothurn 1831–1914. Verfassung – Politik – Kirche* (Solothurn, 1992); and on Ticino, Fabrizio Panzera, 'Dello stato sagrestano alla libertà della chiesa (1848–1890)', in Raffaello Ceschi (ed.), *Storia del Cantone Ticino*, 2 vols. (Bellinzona, 1998), I, 263–96. The impact of the *Kulturkampf* on the diaspora in Protestant Zurich is described in Max Stierlin, *Die Katholiken im Kanton Zürich 1862–1875 im Spannungsfeld zwischen Eingliederung und Absonderung* (Zurich, 1996). On St Gallen, Cornel Dora offers a comprehensive account of the culture war in *Augustinus Egger von St. Gallen 1833–1906. Ein Bischof zwischen Kulturkampf, sozialer Frage und Modernismusstreit* (St Gallen, 1994). Comparable monographic studies of other ecclesiastical exponents of the culture war era are lacking. There are concise portraits of Bishop Lachat and his successor Fiala by Victor Conzemius and P. Gregor Jäggi in the collaborative volume by Urban Fink, Stephan Leimgruber and Markus Ries (eds.), *Die Bischöfe von Basel 1794–1995* (Fribourg, 1996). Victor Conzemius offers an assessment of Eduard Herzog, the first Christian-Catholic bishop, in *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques* (Paris, 1993), XXIV, 257–63.

In the area of source publications, the following editions of letters deserve mention. Two collections have been published from the wide-ranging correspondence of Wessenberg: Rudolf Herzog and Othmar Pfyl (eds.), *Der Briefwechsel 1806–1848 zwischen Ignaz Heinrich von Wessenberg und Heinrich Zschokke* (Basel, 1990) and Manfred Weitlauff and Markus Ries (eds.), *Ignaz Heinrich Freiherr von Wessenberg, Briefwechsel mit dem Luzerner Stadtpfarrer und Bischöflichen Kommissar Thaddäus Müller in den Jahren 1801 bis 1821* (Basel, 1994). From the correspondence of Philipp Anton von Segesser, the conservative Lucerne politician and critical commentator on developments within the church, six volumes (1841–75) have already been published: Philipp Anton von Segesser, *Briefwechsel*, ed. Victor Conzemius (Zurich,

Einsiedeln, Cologne and Fribourg, 1983–95). For an episcopal perspective on events in the bishopric of Basel, see Victor Konzemius (ed.), *Die Berichte 'ad limina' der Bischöfe von Basel 1850–1905* (Fribourg, 1991).

On the formation of the Catholic cadres, see *'Den Riesenkampf mit dieser Zeit zu wagen...'* *Schweizerischer Studentenverein 1841–1991* (Lucerne, 1993) and *Histoire de l'Université de Fribourg Suisse 1889–1989*, 3 vols. (Fribourg, 1991–2). The institutional consolidation of the Catholic social milieu is described in Urs Altermatt, *Der Weg der Schweizer Katholiken ins Ghetto. Die Entstehungsgeschichte der nationalen Volksorganisationen im Schweizer Katholizismus*, 3rd edn (Fribourg, 1995).

A number of authors have provided noteworthy interpretations of the Swiss culture war. Urs Altermatt, *Katholizismus und Moderne. Zur Sozial- und Mentalitätsgeschichte der Schweizer Katholiken im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Zurich, 1989) interprets the culture war as a crisis of modernisation and points to the paradox of an anti-modernism that operates with modern means. Thomas Widmer, *Die Schweiz in der Wachstumskrise der 1880er Jahre* (Zurich, 1992), interprets the education policy of the Radicals as a 'failed attempt at restabilisation' in a period of social and political uncertainty. Victor Konzemius, 'Der Kulturkampf in der Schweiz – Sonderfall oder Paradigma?', *Rottenburger Jahrbuch für Kirchengeschichte* 15 (1996), 27–42, emphasises the role of the radical Catholics. The importance of the clergy is underlined in two contributions by Josef Lang: "Die Firma der zeitverständigen Geistlichen stirbt aus". Die Ultramontanisierung des Schweizer Klerus im langen Kulturkampf von 1830–1880', *traverse. Zeitschrift für Geschichte* 3 (2000), 78–89, and 'Der Unterwaldner Konflikt zwischen dem "neuen Bruder Klaus im Bundesfrack" und dem ultramontanen Klerus', in Alexandra Binnenkade and Aram Mattioli (eds.), *Die Innerschweiz im frühen Bundesstaat (1848–1874). Gesellschaftsgeschichtliche Annäherungen* (Zurich, 1999), 77–108. There has recently been increased interest in Catholic anti-Judaism. The link between ultramontanism and antisemitism is discussed in Josef Lang, 'Ultramontanismus und Antisemitismus in der Urschweiz – oder: Der Kampf gegen die Säkularisierung von Staat und Gesellschaft (1858–1878)', in Olaf Blaschke and Aram Mattioli (eds.), *Katholischer Antisemitismus im 19. Jahrhundert. Ursachen und Traditionen im internationalen Vergleich* (Zurich, 2000), 317–72. In Aram Mattioli (ed.), *Antisemitismus in der Schweiz 1848–1960* (Zurich, 1998), Aram Mattioli, Heidi Bossard-Borner and Josef Lang analyse the reaction of Catholic circles to the emancipation debate of the 1860s; articles by Clemens Thoma and Urs Altermatt cover the period 1900–45; for the twentieth century, see Urs Altermatt, *Katholizismus und*

Antisemitismus. Mentalitäten, Kontinuitäten, Ambivalenzen. Zur Kulturgeschichte der Schweiz 1918–1945 (Frauenfeld, Stuttgart and Vienna, 1999).

On the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the federal state of 1848, several compiled volumes have appeared in which Marco Jorio, Josef Lang and Carlo Moos deal with denominational and church-political aspects; see Thomas Hildbrand and Albert Tanner (eds.), *Im Zeichen der Revolution. Der Weg zum schweizerischen Bundesstaat 1798–1848* (Zurich, 1997); Andreas Ernst, Albert Tanner and Matthias Weishaupt (eds.), *Revolution und Innovation. Die konfliktreiche Entstehung des schweizerischen Bundesstaates von 1848* (Zurich, 1998); Brigitte Studer (ed.), *Etappen des Bundesstaates. Staats- und Nationsbildung der Schweiz 1848–1998* (Zurich, 1998). Further research is needed above all on the process of ultramontanisation, especially within the ranks of the clergy, and on the fate of non-conservative Catholics in Catholic-dominated areas. The role of women also deserves closer attention. For some preliminary approaches, see the contributions by Simone Prodolliet and Christa Mutter in *Auf den Spuren weiblicher Vergangenheit*, vol. I, ed. Annamarie Ryter, Regina Wecker and Susanna Burghartz (= *Itinera* 2/3; Basel, 1985) and vol. II, ed. Arbeitsgruppe Frauengeschichte Basel (Zurich, 1988), which focus on the era after the culture wars, and Victor Conzemius, 'Schweizer Katholizismus weiblich. Die Kongregationen von Menzingen und Ingenbohl im Kontext ihrer Entstehung', *Stimmen der Zeit* 207 (1989), 181–92.

AUSTRIA

Compared to other European countries, above all Germany, the culture wars in the Austrian half of the Habsburg Monarchy (Cisleithania) are poorly served by the existing literature. In general, the historiography on the Habsburg Monarchy from c. 1848–1918 has tended to concentrate overwhelmingly on nationality issues, with the result that the social and cultural history of religion has been given short shrift. We still know far too little about the impact and course of the culture wars in Cisleithania at the ground level, and new research is eminently desirable on numerous areas, ranging from popular piety and the mobilisation of the laity, to the nature of the clergy and episcopacy, the actions of state and municipal authorities, the internal development of the church and the role of the Vatican. What follows is a selective guide to what is currently available and most useful.

No-one wishing to understand the confessional character of the Habsburg state can overlook R. J. W. Evans' masterly survey, *The Making of the Habsburg Monarchy, 1550–1700* (Oxford, 1979). As a general guide to

the religious map of Cisleithania, the first port of call is Adam Wandruszka and Peter Urbanitsch (eds.), *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848–1918*, vol. IV: *Die Konfessionen* (Vienna, 1985), within which Peter Leisching's contribution on 'Die römischkatholische Kirche in Cisleithanien' (1–247) is of particular relevance to the subject in hand. Otherwise, it is a good indication of the relative lack of interest in the topic that the most useful introduction is still Karl Vocelka, *Verfassung oder Konkordat? Der publizistische Kampf der österreichischen Liberalen um die Religionsgesetze des Jahres 1868* (Vienna, 1978). For details of the Concordat, see Erika Weinzierl, *Die österreichischen Konkordate von 1855 und 1933* (Vienna, 1960), while Gottfried Mayer, *Österreich als 'katholische Großmacht'. Ein Traum zwischen Revolution und liberaler Ära* (Vienna, 1989) is especially good on the background.

The situation improves when one considers the history of political parties in Cisleithania during the second half of the nineteenth century, thanks to the recent attention given to the previously neglected subject of Austrian liberalism. Consult in the first instance Pieter M. Judson's excellent *Exclusive Revolutionaries. Liberal Politics, Social Experience and National Identity in the Austrian Empire, 1848–1914* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1996). Worth consulting is the collection edited by Leopold Kammerhofer, entitled *Studien zum Deutschliberalismus in Zisleithanien 1873–1879* (Vienna, 1992). Lothar Höbelt, *Kornblume und Kaiseradler. Die deutschfreiheitlichen Parteien Altösterreichs* (Vienna, 1993) looks at the evolution of German Liberal politics towards a nationalist framework. On the opposite side of the political spectrum, the most helpful general work is Jean-Paul Bled's *Les fondements du conservatisme autrichien 1859–1879* (Paris, 1988), which contains an instructive comparison between conservative-federalist forces. A more detailed study of the Catholic reaction to Liberal legislation is provided by Alan W. France, 'Kulturkampf in Austria: The Vaterland Circle and the Struggle over the Confessional Legislation of May 1868' (Ph.D. thesis, Rice University, Houston, 1975), while Michael J. Zeps, 'The Politics of Education in Austria: Church, State and the Reform of Education, 1765–1962' (Ph.D. thesis, Stanford University, 1979), though concerned primarily with the battle over education in the First Republic, contains a long and substantial chapter on the period 1867–1918. Susanne Herrnleben, 'Zur Funktion des Kulturkampfes in der europäischen Politik. Die Beziehungen zwischen Österreich-Ungarn, Italien und dem Deutschen Reich 1870 bis 1879' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Vienna, 1998) places the Austrian situation in a wider context. William Jenks, *Austria under the Iron Ring, 1879–1893* (Charlottesville, 1965) remains an important guide to subsequent political developments in the immediate post-Liberal era. John W. Boyer,

'Religion and Political Development in Central Europe around 1900: A View from Vienna', *Austrian History Yearbook* 25 (1994), 13–57, offers a brilliant overview of the political consequences of the Austrian *Kulturkampf*.

Turning to studies of specific areas, the starting-point is John W. Boyer's magisterial volumes on *Political Radicalism in Late Imperial Vienna. Origins of the Christian Social Movement 1848–97* (Chicago, 1981) and *Culture and Political Crisis in Vienna. Christian Socialism in Power, 1897–1918* (Chicago, 1995), both of which also have much to say about Cisleithanian politics as a whole. William D. Bowman's important new study, *Priest and Parish in Vienna, 1780–1880* (Boston, 2000) allows many useful insights into the role of the Viennese clergy and changes within the Austrian church as a whole, but has surprisingly little to offer about the culture wars era. Moving into the alpine provinces, the historian is often obliged to mine multiple-volume publications on regional history (*Landesgeschichte*) or local history journals. Nevertheless, a number of interesting studies exist, although one still awaits a convincing synthesis of the long-term development of Catholic-Conservative and Christian Social politics in German-speaking Austria as a whole. Works devoted exclusively to the 'hot phase' of the culture wars are very few: Josef Fontana, *Der Kulturkampf in Tirol, 1861–92* (Bozen, 1978) is rather more focused than Harald Gnisen, *Ecclesia militans salisburgensis. Kulturkampf in Salzburg 1848–1914* (Vienna and Salzburg, 1972). Generally, coverage of society and politics in the Austrian provinces is uneven, though Tirol is now well served by two new studies: Laurence Cole, *'Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland'. Nationale Identität der deutschsprachigen Bevölkerung Tirols 1860–1914* (Frankfurt and New York, 2000) concentrates on the German part of the region and focuses in particular on the Catholic-Conservative dominance of Tirolian society; it is complemented by Thomas Götz's pathbreaking comparative study of German and Italian liberalism in the region, *Bürgertum und Liberalismus in Tirol 1840–1873: Zwischen Stadt und 'Region', Staat und Nation* (Cologne, 2001). Elsewhere, liberalism has attracted little scholarship, other than Kurt Wimmer, *Liberalismus in Oberösterreich. Am Beispiel des liberal-politischen Vereines für Oberösterreich in Linz, 1869–1909* (Linz, 1979). Otherwise, the main focus has been on the emergence of the Christian Social Party, the best study being that by Gavin Lewis, *Kirche und Partei im politischen Katholizismus. Klerus und Christlichsoziale in Niederösterreich 1885–1907* (Salzburg, 1977). Rupert Klieber, *Politischer Katholizismus in der Provinz. Salzburgs Christlichsoziale in der Parteienlandschaft Alt-Österreichs* (Vienna and Salzburg, 1994) is a reasonable overview, while Harry Slapnicka, *Christlichsoziale in Oberösterreich. Vom Katholikenverein 1848 bis zum Ende der Christlichsozialen 1934* (Linz,

1984) is more patchy and unreliable. Alois Adler, '*Die christlichsoziale Bewegung in der Steiermark von den ständischen Anfängen zur Volkspartei*' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Graz, 1956) gives a very basic description of the movement's origins. Finally, much can be expected from a dissertation in progress by Max Vögler, '*A Catholic City Faces Modernity: Linz, 1855–1918*' (Columbia University, New York).

Without question, research is urgently needed into the culture wars era in places such as Bohemia, Moravia and Galicia to expand on the outlines covered by research to date. For further references and overviews of the situation from a Czech perspective, consult Otto Urban, *Česká společnost 1848–1918* (Prague, 1982) (German: *Die tschechische Gesellschaft 1848–1918*, 2 vols. (Vienna 1994)) and Jiří Malíř, *Od spolků k moderním politickým stranám. Vývo politických stran na Moravě v letech 1848–1914* (Brno, 1996), while perhaps the best introductory guide to the political situation in Galicia is Andrei S. Markovits and Frank E. Sysyn (eds.), *Nationbuilding and the Politics of Nationalism. Essays on Austrian Galicia* (Cambridge, Mass., 1982).

Lastly, the mood of the culture wars' second wave is memorably captured in Arthur Schnitzler's absorbing drama, *Professor Bernhardi*, which brings the ideological antagonisms and political machinations vividly to life. The continuing repercussions of the dispute in the First Republic are covered (among others) by Michael J. Zeps, *Education and the Crisis of the First Republic* (Boulder, 1987), Martina Ščevak, 'Der 'Kulturkampf' in Österreich in der demokratischen Phase der Ersten Republik unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der katholischen Kirche in Kärnten' (MA thesis, University of Klagenfurt, 1987); Ralf A. Höfer, 'Kulturkämperischer und gesellschaftspolitischer Disput in Österreich nach dem I. Weltkrieg zwischen katholischer, deutschliberaler und austromarxistischer Presse' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Graz, 1991) and Paulus Ebner, '*Der Streit um die Feuerbestattung zwischen katholischer Kirche und Sozialdemokratie. Eine Studie zum Kulturkampf in der Ersten Republik*' (MA thesis, University of Vienna, 1989).

HUNGARY

The starting-point for consideration of the Hungarian culture war remains Moritz Csáky, *Der Kulturkampf in Ungarn* (Vienna, 1967). Like most scholars, Csáky sees the initiative in culture war coming from the liberal side. Péter Hanák, however, has argued the opposite, suggesting in *Magyarország története 1890–1918*, 2 vols. (Budapest, 1988) I, 73–106, that an incipient political Catholicism was responsible for the escalation of the conflict. There

are several older but still valuable surveys of the culture war, including Gábor Salacz, *A magyar kultúrharc története 1890–1905* (Pécs, 1938) and Árpád Zeller, *A magyar egyházpolitika 1847–1894*, 2 vols. (Budapest, 1894), which contains useful primary sources. The long-term consequences of the culture war are thoughtfully examined in Paul Hanebrink, 'In Defense of Christian Hungary: Religion, Nationalism, and Antisemitism in Inter-War Hungary, 1919–1944' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Chicago, 2000).

The Catholic church is by far the best studied of Hungary's many confessions. A wealth of statistics and bibliographical references can be found in Csáky's excellent overview in Adam Wandruszka and Peter Urbanitsch (eds.), *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848–1918*, vol. IV: *Die Konfessionen* (Vienna, 1985), 248–331. Two surveys by émigré historians, Egyed Hermann, *A katolikus egyház története Magyarországon 1914-ig* (Munich, 1973) and Gabriel Adriányi, *Fünffzig Jahre ungarischer Kirchengeschichte 1895–1945* (Mainz, 1974) are also useful. More specialised studies of the Hungarian church usually focus on the hierarchy, on relations between Hungary and Rome, and on the architects of the turn-of-the-century Catholic 'revival'. A notable exception is the work of historian Dániel Szabó, who has shown a refreshing willingness to examine the social underpinnings of political Catholicism in 'A Néppárt megalakulása', *Történelmi Szemle* 20/2 (1977), 169–208 and 'A Néppárt az 1896. évi országgyűlési választásokon', *Századok* 112/4 (1978), 730–56. In an original if not entirely convincing article, 'The Dawn of Political Catholicism in Hungary, 1844–1848', *Hungarian Studies* 13/1 (1998/9), 13–26, Csaba Fazekas has suggested that the roots of Catholic politics should be dated to the 1840s, not the 1890s. Jenő Gergely, *A politikai katolicizmus Magyarországon (1890–1950)* (Budapest, 1977) documents the long-term development of political Catholicism.

Hungary's other confessions have received far less attention. For Hungarian Protestants, a useful point of departure is Juliane Brandt, 'Protestantismus und Gesellschaft im dualistischen Ungarn', *Südostforschungen* 55 (1996), 179–240. As Brandt notes, Hungarian scholars have rarely used the tools of social or cultural history to examine the churches. The struggle for Jewish emancipation is outlined in János Gyurgyák, *A zsidókérdés Magyarországon* (Budapest, 2001), which builds on a growing literature on Hungarian Jewry, though one usually focused on Budapest. There are also several studies of Hungarian antisemitism, including Judit Kubinszky, *Politikai antiszemitizmus Magyarországon* (Budapest, 1976) and Rolf Fischer, *Entwicklungsstufen des Antisemitismus in Ungarn* (Munich, 1988).

Hungarian liberalism has been widely studied, but almost invariably from the perspective of Budapest and through the prism of formal politics.

The struggles with the Catholic church are too often treated as a discrete chapter in the history of liberalism. A useful corrective to this, and one that spells out the limits to the liberals' victory in the culture war, is László Péter, 'Hungarian Liberals and Church-State Relations, 1867–1900', in György Ránki (ed.), *Hungary and European Civilization* (Budapest, 1989), 79–138. Liberal political culture is the subject of Alice Freifeld's important new work, *Nationalism and the Crowd in Liberal Hungary, 1848–1914* (Washington D.C., 2000), which describes economic exhibitions, public statuary and patriotic celebrations of the Dualist era. Two political biographies, Gábor Vermes, *István Tisza* (Boulder, Colo., 1985) and Géza Andreas von Geyr, *Sándor Wekerle 1848–1921* (Munich, 1993), also provide insight into the period.

There is much work to be done on the Hungarian culture war and on the intersection of religion, politics, nationality and culture in Hungary more generally. Literature examining the role of religion in shaping national and supranational loyalties is uneven at best: though scholars have studied the connections between Orthodoxy and the Serbian and Romanian national movements, they have done little to dispel long-held myths about patriotic Calvinists and disloyal Catholics. Such a reassessment hinges on a more critical view of nineteenth-century nationalism, and one that allows for multiple, contested forms of national loyalty. New approaches to the culture war also require that scholars take a broader view of what constitutes 'political' activity. Sermons, pamphlet literature, freemasonry and public demonstrations are only a few areas that need to be studied. Tamás Dersi's *A századvég katolikus sajtója* (Budapest, 1973) ably discusses the Catholic press, yet we still know very little about the language of the culture wars or about its imagery, even though many periodicals were carrying illustrations by the 1890s. Voluntary associations, a fixture of urban life and the cornerstone of the Catholic movement, are another notable omission.

A remedy for some of these problems may lie in local studies. Scholars, quite simply, need to shift their gaze from Budapest and instead examine what was happening in towns and villages during the culture war. With their religious, social and linguistic diversity, the towns of western and northern Hungary seem particularly promising. In Sopron, for example, Catholics were outnumbered in the town council, yet managed to hold a large rally and found a German-language newspaper. Sopron was perhaps exceptional, but until we know more about what was happening across the country, it will be difficult to assess the full historical importance of the Hungarian culture war.

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